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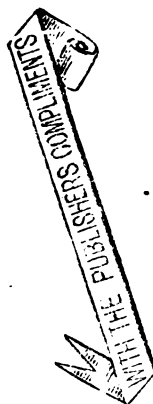
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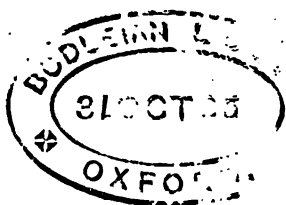
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE former portion of this Book continues the brief abstract of Old Testament History, with the biographies of a few of the most remarkable of its heroes. This is followed by a short notice of each of the Prophets, and a few chapters which bring down the history to the birth of Christ.

The latter portion is occupied with *precept* rather than *history*. It exhibits the Divine modes of teaching by Figures, Parables, Miracles, Visions, Emblems, Hymns, and Proverbs. These chapters, it is hoped, will furnish abundant material to skilful teachers for a very large number of oral lessons, while the Proverbs might be committed to memory by the pupils with much advantage to them in after life.

The Editor would also refer teachers for additional information of a similar kind to the "Help to Students of the Bible," compiled by him, for their use, for the Oxford University Press.

The Tables, to be found in the Appendix, will be useful both for reference and in elucidation of the text.

The Editor begs again to record his thanks to those Authors and Publishers who have so courteously and readily allowed him to make extracts from their valuable works.

JAMES RIDGWAY.

OXFORD, 1877.

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THE
OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

PART II.

CHAPTER LX.

KINGS OF ISRAEL.

THERE were nineteen kings who reigned over the ten tribes of Israel. But all of them were wicked.

1. JE-RO-BO-AM, the son of Nebat. He made two calves of gold, and he set the one in Bethel, and the other in Dan. And he said to the people, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And the people worshipped them. "And he made a house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi. He also offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel."

God sent a man of God from Judah to rebuke him, as he sacrificed on that altar; and he foretold, that Josiah, a King of Judah, should burn the bones of

the false priests on that same altar, and so it came to pass.

God also sent Ahijah the prophet to tell Jeroboam—

“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it to thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart to do that only which was right in mine eyes; and hast done evil above all that were before thee; for thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back; I will cut off from Jeroboam every man in the city.

“Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat: and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat; for the Lord hath spoken it.”

2. NADAB, the son of Jeroboam, reigned after his father. “He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father, and in the sin wherewith Jeroboam made Israel to sin.”

When he had reigned two years, Baasha conspired against him and slew him.

3. BA-A-SHA, of the house of Ahijah, of the tribe of Issachar, became king after Nadab's death. “He did evil in the sight of the Lord; and walked in the way of Jeroboam.”

4. ELAH, the son of Baasha, reigned after his father. He also did evil in the sight of the Lord; and when he had been king two years, Zimri, who was captain of half his chariots, smote him.

5. ZIMRI took the kingdom after the death of Elah. He destroyed all the family of Baasha, as God had foretold by the prophet Jehu.

And Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah; and then the city being taken, he went into the palace, and burnt it over him with fire.

6. OMRI became king after Zimri. He did evil in the sight of the Lord worse than all that were before him.

QUESTIONS.

How many kings of Israel were there? Of what sort were they? What was the sin of Jeroboam? Who was Ahijah? What did he tell Jeroboam? How many kings of Israel were *killed*? What became of Zimri?

CHAPTER LXI.

KINGS OF ISRAEL (*continued*).

7. AHAB, the son of Omri, reigned after his father. He was a very wicked king. "He did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him."



THE DEATH OF AHAB.

He married Jezebel, the daughter of Eth-ba-al, King of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal and worshipped him. He also worshipped As-tarte or Ash-ta-roth.



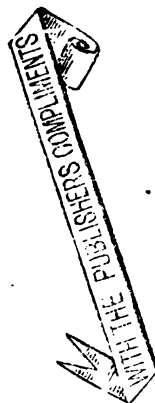
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Who anointed Jehu? What did God set him to do? What was his sin? What is meant by "walking in the way of his father?" Who was the last King of Israel? What happened in his reign?

S A B B A T H.

Oh, what their joy and their glory must be,
Those endless Sabbaths the blessed ones see!
Crown for the valiant; to weary ones rest;
God shall be all, and in all, ever blest.

What are the Monarch, his Court, and his Throne?
What are the peace and the joy that they own?
Tell us, ye blest ones, that in it have share,
If what ye feel ye can fully declare.

Truly "Jerusalem" name we that shore,
"Vision of Peace" that brings joy evermore!
Wish and fulfilment can severed be ne'er;
Nor the thing prayed for come short of the prayer.

We, where no trouble distraction can bring,
Safely the anthems of Zion shall sing;
While for Thy grace, Lord, their voices of praise
Thy blessed people shall evermore raise.

There dawns no Sabbath—no Sabbath is o'er;
Those Sabbath-keepers have one, and no more:
One and unending is that triumph-song
Which to the angels and us shall belong.

Now in the meanwhile, with hearts raised on high,
We for that country must yearn and must sigh;
Seeking Jerusalem, dear native land,
Through our long exile on Babylon's strand.

Dr. J. M. Neale.

CHAPTER LXIII.

ELIJAH.

LUKE iv. 25, 26.—*But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.*

ELIJAH was one of the greatest of God's prophets. He dwelt in the land of Gilead, on the eastern side of the River Jordan.

He was sent by God to oppose idolatry in Israel during the reign of the wicked Ahab. He came to Ahab and foretold a three years' drought.



ELIJAH IS FED BY RAVENS.

He hid himself by the brook Cherith, where he lived upon "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening" (which ravens brought him), and the water of the brook.

The brook having dried up, he went to a poor widow of Zar-e-phath, who supported him for three years with her "handful of meal in a barrel" and her "little oil in a cruse." For "the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Elijah."

While he was staying here, the poor widow's son fell sick and died. The woman looked upon this as a punishment for her sins, and said to Elijah, "Oh, thou man of God, art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"

Then Elijah asked her to bring her dead son to him. And when she had brought him he took him up into the upper chamber where he dwelt. Then he stretched



ELIJAH RAISING THE WIDOW'S SON.

himself upon the child three times, and said, "O Lord my God, I pray Thee let this child's life come into him again." The Lord heard Elijah's prayer, and He restored the son to life.

Then the prophet took the child, and delivered him to his mother, who said, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is true."

At the end of three years, Elijah by Divine command went to seek Ahab. On his way he met Obadiah, the steward of Ahab's house, a good man, who hid "a hundred prophets of the Lord by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water."

Elijah sent Obadiah to inform Ahab of his approach.

Ahab, on seeing the prophet, charged him with troubling Israel. Elijah replied, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." Then Elijah requested the king to assemble all the prophets of Baal, and the people of Israel, on Mount Carmel, to prove whether the Lord or Baal were the true God.

Each company was to offer a sacrifice to its God, but without the fire; and he who should answer their prayers by sending fire to burn up the sacrifice should be considered the true God.

Each offered a sacrifice; that of Baal being untouched, while that of Elijah, though water was three times poured over it, was consumed by fire from heaven. The people fell upon their faces, and exclaimed, "The Lord, He is the God; the Lord, He is the God."

Elijah now ordered the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal to be taken down to the banks of the River Kishon, where they were slain.

After this, at the prayer of the prophet, the long-looked for rain poured down, and the famine ceased.

QUESTIONS.

What was Elijah? What is a prophet? Where did he live? Who sent Elijah to Ahab? For what purpose? Who was Ahab? What is *drought*? Why did Elijah hide himself? How was he sustained? When the brook dried up, where did he go? How long did he stay at Zarephath? How was he there sustained? What happened to the widow's son? What did the widow think had caused the illness? What did she say to Elijah? How did that prophet act? After the miracle was worked, what did the widow say to Elijah? Where did Elijah go when he left

Zarephath? Whom did he meet on his way? What do you know of Obadiah? What did Ahab say to Elijah? What was the reply? What request did Elijah make? How did he purpose proving which was the true God? Give some account of the sacrifice offered on Mount Carmel. What became of the prophets of Baal?

THANKSGIVING FOR RAIN.

OH! sing to the Lord,
Whose bountiful hand
Again doth accord
His gifts to the land.

His clouds have shed down
Their plenteousness here,
His goodness shall crown
The hopes of the year.

In clefts of the hills
The founts he hath burst,
And poureth their rills
Through valleys athirst.

The merciful King,
Of purity born,
Makes herbage to spring,
Prepareth the corn.

The river of God
The pastures hath blest;
The dry, withered sod
In greenness is drest.

And ever the fold
Shall teem with its sheep;
With harvests of gold
The fields shall be deep.

The vales shall rejoice
With laughter and song,
And men's grateful voice
The music prolong.

So, too, may He pour,
The last and the first,
His graces in store
On spirits athirst.

Till, when the Great Day
Of harvest hath come,
He takes us away
To garner at home.

A. L. P.

CHAPTER LXIV.

ELIJAH (*continued*).

JEZEBEL, the wicked wife of the wicked Ahab, now sought the life of Elijah. The prophet fled. He came to a wilderness, where, worn out with fatigue and hunger, he sat down under a juniper tree, and requested that he might die, and fell asleep.

But God was watching over His servant. He sent His angel, who awoke him, and supplied him with "a cake baked on the coals and a cruse of water at his head," in the strength of which he was sustained forty days and forty nights.

Elijah came to Horeb, the mount of God, where he lodged in a cave. While in this lonely place the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" The prophet replied that all he had done for the Lord had been in vain.

On this the Lord bade him stand before Him upon the mountain, and first "a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord, *but the Lord was not in the wind*. Then there was an earthquake, *but the Lord was not in the earthquake*. And after the earthquake there was a fire, *but the Lord was not in the fire*."

Then, while all was quiet, Elijah heard a "still small

voice," which taught him that he was not left alone, and that there was still work left for him to do.

He was to return and anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, Jehu to be king over Israel, and Elisha as his own successor. The "*still small voice*" told him that, instead of his being left alone, the Lord had left him seven thousand in Israel which had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Elijah afterwards foretold the judgments that awaited Ahab, Jezebel, and Ahaziah.

"In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

"The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.

"Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die."

NOTE.—*Juniper*, a well-known tree of the cedar family.

QUESTIONS.

What was the name of Ahab's wife? Was she a good or a bad woman? What was her intention towards Elijah? Why did she not succeed? Where did Elijah flee? What happened to him in this wilderness? Where did Elijah next go? What did God say to him? What answer did the prophet make? What then happened? Shew that Elijah was not left alone. What work had God for him? What did he foretell concerning Ahab? and Jezebel? and Ahaziah?

CHAPTER LXV.

ELIJAH (*continued*).

A-HA-ZI-AH, on discovering where Elijah was, sent a captain with fifty men to seize him. The soldiers, finding him on Mount Carmel, bade him come down.

But the prophet refused to come down when thus commanded, and at his word fire was sent from heaven which consumed them all. A second force met with a similar fate. But a third captain came and fell on his

knees before Elijah, and prayed that the man of God would descend. On being assured of God's protection, Elijah at last came down from the mountain, when he appeared before the king and pronounced his doom.

"Now when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And he said to Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord sends me to Bethel. And Elisha answered, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee.

"So they went down to Bethel. And the sons of the prophets that were at Bethel came forth to Elisha, and



BETHEL.

said, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold you your peace.

"And Elijah said to Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord sends me to Jericho.

"And he answered, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.

"And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho said to Elisha, Knowest thou that the Lord will take

away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold you your peace.

"And Elijah said to him, Tarry, I pray thee, here, for the Lord sends me to Jordan; but he answered, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.

"And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood to view afar off, whilst they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither; so they two went over on dry land.

"And when they were gone over, Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what shall I do for thee, before I am taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me.

"And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: yet, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it will be so to thee; but if not, it will not be so.

"And it came to pass as they went on and talked, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which



ELIJAH TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN.

parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

Many years afterwards Elijah (called also Elias) came and talked with our Saviour at His Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 3).

NOTES.—*Sons of the Prophets* were young men taught in a college to be prophets, or teachers of God's will, by older prophets.

QUESTIONS.

Why were the soldiers sent to Elijah? Who sent them? Where was Elijah? What happened to the first band of soldiers? What to the next? How did the captain of the third company act? Where did Elijah go after he came down from the mountain? For what purpose? Who spent much of his time with Elijah? On what occasions did he say he would not leave his master? What miracle did Elijah work at the Jordan? After crossing the Jordan, what conversation took place between Elijah and Elisha? Give an account of Elijah's translation. On what occasion do we read of him after his translation?

CHAPTER LXVI.

ELISHA.

ECCLES. xlviii. 13.—*After his death he prophesied; he did wonders in his life, and at his death his works were marvellous.*

ELISHA, the son of Shaphat, was born in a village, called Abel-me-ho-lah, belonging to the tribe of Issachar. He was taken from the plough, and anointed by Elijah to be his successor.

"So Elijah departed thence and found Elisha, who was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him; upon which he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, saying, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee.

"And he said unto him, Go back again: for what

have I done to thee? So he returned back, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave to the people, and they did eat: then he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him."

He was with Elijah in his last journey to the schools at Bethel and Jericho, and when he crossed the River Jordan. He saw his translation, caught his falling mantle, and received a double portion of his spirit.

On his return to the Jordan, he smote the water with his master's mantle, and so divided the stream. When at Jericho he sweetened the unwholesome water near the city, by throwing salt into it.

As he was going to Bethel some little children mocked him. Elisha, angry that reproach should be thus cast upon his message or upon the Master whom he served, turned and cursed them, when two she-bears rushed out of the woods and tare forty and two of them to pieces.

When the armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom, were perishing for want of water, he procured them a miraculous supply.

A widow of one of the sons of the prophets was in debt, for which her two sons were to be sold as slaves. On making her distress known to Elisha, he caused her "cruse of oil" to multiply, till she had filled all the vessels she could borrow. He then ordered her, "Go sell the oil and pay thy debt; afterwards live thou and thy children on the rest."

QUESTIONS.

Where was Elisha born? What was the name of his father? How was he employed when Elijah called him? What is a *yoke* of oxen? Give an account of his call. What were the *schools* at Bethel and Jericho? What miracle did Elisha work at the Jordan? and what at Jericho? What took place at Bethel? What lesson should this teach us? How did the prophet assist the armies of Israel? How did he help the widow of one of the sons of the prophets?

CHAPTER LXVII.

ELISHA (continued).

AT Shunem, in the tribe of Issachar, a rich woman's



ELISHA RAISETH THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON.

son had been struck dead by a sun-stroke in the harvest field. Elisha restored him to life.

At Gilgal, in a time of dearth, some of the sons of the prophets shred wild and poisonous gourds into a caldron or pot. Elisha cast meal into it, and so made the pottage fit for food.

At Jericho, as the sons of the prophets were felling trees near the Jordan, the head of an axe flew off from the handle and fell into the water. Elisha "cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim." And the man who had borrowed the axe put forth his hand and took it.

He cleansed Naaman, captain of the hosts of the King

of Syria, of his leprosy, by directing him to wash seven times in the Jordan.

He afterwards struck his servant Gehazi with leprosy for his covetousness and deceit.

He smote the Syrian army, sent to seize him, with blindness.

He foretold the departure of the Syrians from Samaria, and that Benhadad, King of Syria, should die, and Hazael should be king.

"And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming of the year.

"And it came to pass as they were burying a man, that behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived and stood upon his feet."

QUESTIONS.

What miracle did Elisha work at Shunem? and at Gilgal? and at Jericho? What are gourds? Who was Naaman? and Gehazi? What other miracles did Elisha work? Shew that "he did wonders in his life, and at his death his works were marvellous."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

KINGS OF JUDAH.

THERE were twenty kings who reigned over Judah, after the kingdom which Solomon governed was divided into two.

1. **RE-HO-BO-AM**, the son of Solomon, was a weak and foolish king. During his reign "Judah did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they provoked Him to jealousy with their sins, which they had committed, above all that their fathers had done. For they also built them

high places, and images, and groves on every high hill, and under every green tree."

When Rehoboam had reigned five years, Shishak, King of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house. He also took away all the shields of gold, which Solomon had made.

2. ABIJAM, the son of Rehoboam, next reigned over Judah. "His heart was not perfect with the Lord his God; and he walked in the sins of his father." His son

3. ASA next reigned in his stead,

"And he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, as did David his father."

He took away all the idols; he also removed his mother from being queen, because she had made an idol in the grove.

4. JE-HOSH-A-PHAT, the son of Asa, now became king.

"And he walked in all the ways of Asa his father."

But his son,

5. JE-HO-RAM, who reigned in his stead, was a wicked king. He married the daughter of Ahab, and "he wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord;" therefore the Lord smote him with an incurable disease, so that he died.

6. A-HA-ZI-AH, Jehoram's son, next became king. He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab; for his mother, the daughter of Ahab, King of Israel, advised him to do wickedly.

Ahaziah was slain, and his mother

7. ATH-A-LI-AH reigned after him.

She was a very wicked woman, and put to death all the heirs to the throne, except one little baby, who was hid by his sister in the house of Je-hoi-a-da, the high priest, until he was six years old, when Jehoiada brought him into the temple, anointed him king, and the people shouted for joy. Then Athaliah rushed into

the temple to see what caused the shouting, and was killed.

QUESTIONS.

How many kings of Judah were there? What caused the division of the kingdom? What king of Egypt attacked them? What did he do? Which kings were good? What queen reigned? Whose daughter was she? What wicked act did she do? What became of her?

CHAPTER LXIX.

KINGS OF JUDAH (*continued*).

8. JOASH, the son of Ahaziah,

"Did that which was right in the sight of the Lord,"

All the days of Jehoiada the priest; "and he repaired the house of the Lord, which the sons of Athaliah had broken up." His son

9. A-MA-ZI-AH next became king. "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart; for when he came from the slaughter of the Edomites, he brought the gods of the children of Seir, and set them up to be his gods, and bowed down himself before them, and burned incense unto them."

10. UZZIAH, the son of Amaziah, "did that which was right in the sight of the Lord," according to all that his father Amaziah did. So long as he sought the Lord God, He made him to prosper.

He sinned against God by burning incense upon the altar of incense in the temple. And God punished him by striking him with leprosy; for he had done that which was only lawful for the priests.

"And Uzziāh the king was a leper unto the day of his death."

11. JOTHAM, the son of Uzziāh, was a good king.

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord," according to all that his father Uzziāh did.

And he became mighty, "because he prepared his ways before the Lord his God." His son

12. **AHAZ** was a wicked king. He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made molten images for Baalim. "He sacrificed also, and burnt incense in the high places and on the hills, under every green tree." So God delivered him into the hand of the King of Assyria, and into the hand of the King of Israel.

13. **HEZEKIAH** reigned in the stead of his father,

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done."

When he was very ill, and at the point of death, he prayed to God, and God gave him his life for fifteen years longer. Another time, the Assyrians came up with a great army against Jerusalem, and besieged it; but the Assyrian king, being called away to defend himself against the King of Egypt, sent a blasphemous letter to Hezekiah, which he took up to the temple and laid it before the Lord, and prayed, saying, "Lord, bow down thine ear, and hear: open, Lord, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sen-nach-er-ib, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. Now, therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save Thou us out of his hands, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou art the Lord God, even Thou only."

"And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses. So Sen-nach-er-ib, King of Assyria, departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh."

"And Hezekiah kept a great passover. So there was great joy in Jerusalem. . . . Then the priests arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to His holy dwelling-place, even unto heaven.

"And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good, and right, and true,

before the Lord his God. And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered."

QUESTIONS.

Who was Joash? Who hid him? How old was he when he was made king? What sort of a king was he? What do you know about Uzziah? What sort of a king was Hezekiah? What great feast did he keep? What kindness did God shew him?

CHAPTER LXX.

KINGS OF JUDAH (*continued*).

14. MAN-AS-SEH reigned in the room of his father. "But he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. Because he would not hearken to the voice of the Lord, He allowed the King of Assyria to bind him with fetters and carry him to Babylon.

In his affliction he repented of his sins. He humbled himself before God, and prayed to Him. God, in His mercy, heard him, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom.

"And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he built in the mount of the house of the Lord and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city.

"And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings, and thank-offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel."

15. AMON, the son of Manasseh, did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. "And he humbled not himself before the Lord, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself,"

And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

16. JOSIAH, the son of Amon, was a good king.

“He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and turned not aside to the right nor to the left.

“And like unto Josiah was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to



THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

all the law of Moses: neither after him arose there any like him.”

And Josiah went up to Bethel, and destroyed the calf at Bethel, and the altar; and he burnt on the altar the bones of the priests, that had burnt incense there, as the Lord had said; but he spared the bones of the man of God, that came from Judah and foretold these things in the days of Jeroboam, who set up the calf, and taught Israel to sin.

17. JE-HO-A-HAZ, the son of Josiah, did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.

18. JE-HOI-A-KIM, the son of Josiah, was a wicked king. Ne-bu-chad-nez-zar, King of Babylon, attacked Judæa. He carried into Babylon the treasures of the temple and many captives, including Daniel, the prophet.

19. JE-HOI-A-KIN, the son of Jehoiakim, followed the wicked example of his father.

Ne-bu-chad-nez-zar came to Jerusalem, took away what remained of the treasures of the temple, the king, and the chief of the inhabitants.

20. ZE-DE-KI-AH was the last of the kings of Judah. He was very wicked. Having revolted against Ne-bu-chad-nez-zar, that monarch laid siege to Jerusalem and destroyed it. After having the king's eyes put out, he loaded him with fetters of brass, and took him to Babylon, where he died.

And thus did the word of the Lord come to pass, which was spoken by the prophet Ezekiel, "And I will bring him to Babylon, . . . yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there."

QUESTIONS.

Who was the son of Hezekiah? What sort of a king was he? How was he punished? What was the effect? How did he shew his sorrow? Who was Josiah? Tell me some of his good deeds. Describe his character. How did he die? What king took Jerusalem? What became of the temple, and the people? Who was the last king? What happened to him?

THE LOST SHEEP.

I WAS a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold :
I did not love my Shepherd's voice,
I would not be controlled.
I was a wayward child,
I did not love my home,
I did not love my Father's voice,
I loved afar to roam.

The Shepherd sought His sheep,
The Father sought His child ;
They followed me o'er vale and hill,
O'er deserts waste and wild.
They found me nigh to death,
Famished, and faint, and lone ;
They bound me with the bands of love,
They saved the wandering one.

They spoke in tender love,
They raised my drooping head ;
They gently closed my bleeding wounds,
My fainting soul they fed.
They washed my filth away,
They made me clean and fair ;
They brought me to my home in peace,--
The long-sought wanderer !

Jesus my Shepherd is,
'Twas He that loved my soul,
'Twas He that washed me in His blood,
'Twas He that made me whole.
'Twas He that sought me lost,
That found the wandering sheep ;
'Twas He that brought me to the fold,
'Tis He that still doth keep.

I was a wandering sheep,
I would not be controlled ;
But now I love my Shepherd's voice,
I love, I love the fold !
I was a wayward child,
I once preferred to roam ;
But now I love my Father's voice,
I love, I love His home.

Bonar.

CHAPTER LXXI.

THE PROPHETS.

THE last portion of the Old Testament was written by prophets. Their books are called the Prophetical Books, so named because they *chiefly* foretell future events.

There are sixteen prophetical books, four written by the Greater Prophets, and the remaining twelve by the Lesser Prophets.

The Greater Prophets are so named because their writings were more numerous than those of the Lesser Prophets.

The writings of the Lesser Prophets are very valuable in giving us much information about the state of the country during the reigns of the kings of Judah and Israel. They also give warnings of the fate of Babylon, Nineveh, Damascus, Sidon and Tyre, as well as describe the coming and character of the Messiah.

THE SIXTEEN PROPHETS.

Those printed in Capitals are the Greater Prophets.

Before the Captivity.	1. Jonah.	During the Captivity.	10. Habakkuk.	After the Captivity.	14. Haggai.
	2. Amos.		11. DANIEL.		15. Zechariah.
	3. Hosea.		12. Obadiah.		16. Malachi.
	4. ISAIAH.		13. EZEKIEL.		
	5. Joel.				
	6. Micah.				
	7. Nahum.				
	8. Zephaniah.				
	9. JEREMIAH.				

QUESTIONS.

What is a prophet? In which part of the Bible are the books written by the prophets to be found? Why are they called *Prophetical Books*? How many prophetical books are there? How are they divided? Why are some called *Greater*? Why some *Lesser*? Why are the writings of the Lesser Prophets so valuable? What are some of their contents? Name the *Greater* Prophets. Name as many as you can of the others.

THOU, GOD, SEEST ME.

AMONG the deepest shades of night
Can there be one who sees my way?
Yes;—God is like a shining light,
That turns the darkness into day.

When every eye around me sleeps,
May I not sin without control?
No!—for a constant watch He keeps
On every thought of every soul.

If I could find some cave unknown,
Where human feet had never trod,
Yet there I could not be alone;
On every side there would be God.

He smiles in heaven, He frowns in hell,
He fills the air, the earth, the sea;
I must within His presence dwell,
I cannot from His anger flee.

Yet I may flee, He shews me where;
Tells me to Jesus Christ to fly;
And while He sees me weeping there,
There's only mercy in His eye.

Mrs. Gilbert.

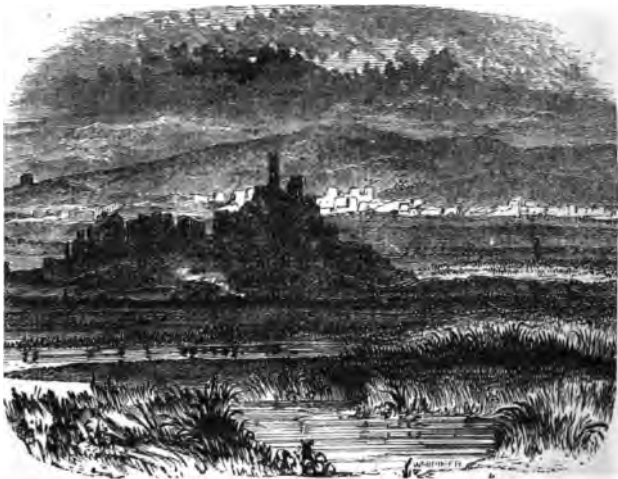
CHAPTER LXXII.

THE PROPHETS BEFORE THE CAPTIVITY.

PSAL. cxxxix. 7, 9, 10.—*Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

MATT. xii. 40.—*As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

JONAH (*dove*) was the son of Amittai, of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulun, and he prophesied in the reign of Jeroboam II., King of Israel. He was the first of those prophets who wrote a book which has come down to us.



NINEVEH.

He was ordered by God to go and tell the people of Nineveh, that in forty days their city should be destroyed; but he was afraid to go: so he ran off to

Joppa (just the opposite way), and finding a ship sailing to Spain, he paid his fare and got on board. Then God sent a great storm, and the ship was nearly lost; so the sailors cast lots to see who had made God so angry, and the lot fell to Jonah. He was afraid then, and sorry; so he told them to throw him into the sea, and they did. Then the sea was calm.

But God set a whale to swallow Jonah; and when he prayed, the whale put him out on dry land. Then God told him to go to Nineveh; and he went and preached, and the people all repented, and prayed to God, so that He did not destroy the city. He spared it because there were 120,000 little children in it, who did not know right from wrong.

Then Jonah was displeased, because his words had not come true; but God reproved him for wishing that all these little children should be killed, merely to save his word.

AMOS (*burden*) was born at Tekoah, in Judah.

He was a shepherd and woodman, and was sent by God to warn the people against worshipping the calf at Bethel; but King Jeroboam II. ordered him away, and he was forced to go back to Judah.

HOSEA, or HOSHEA (*Saviour*), was the son of Beeri, and lived about the same time as Amos and Joel and Isaiah.

He prophesied in the reign of Uzziah, King of Judah, but chiefly spoke against the kingdom of Israel.

ISAIAH (*salvation of Jah*) was the son of Amoz (not the prophet).

He lived in the time of Uzziah, King of Judah, and on to the reign of Hezekiah, where we read a good deal about him in the Second Book of Kings. He told the king that the Assyrian army should all be destroyed, and that he should live fifteen years longer, when he was at the point of death. He foretold a great deal of the sufferings of our Saviour.

JOEL (*whose God is Jehovah*) was the son of Beth-u-el, and he was born at Beth-o-ron, twelve miles north-west of Jerusalem. The Jews say he lived in the time of Elisha; but it is more likely it was in the

time of Josiah or Hezekiah. He describes some great visitation; but the locusts probably mean the great armies of Assyria.

MICAH (*who is like unto Jehovah* ¹) is called the *Morasthite* (native of Morasthi, or probably of Maresha, i. 15), and is mentioned by Jeremiah (xxvi. 18). He lived in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. His book is full of warnings against the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.

NAHUM (*consolation*) calls himself the Elkoshite (a native of Elkosh, said to have been in Galilee). He prophesied against Nineveh, as Jonah had done; so it had fallen back into sin. He speaks of locusts and grasshoppers, and of the great trade of Nineveh.

ZEPH-A-NIAH (*Jehovah hath guarded*) was the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah. He lived in the reign of Josiah, King of Judah, and prophesied against the rich people at Jerusalem, the princes and merchants. He also warned the rich merchants of the coast (the Philistines) and the border tribes of Ammon and Moab, by the Dead Sea, that they should become like Sodom. Nineveh, too, was to be what it is now, "a place for beasts to lie down in."

JEREMIAH (*appointed by Jehovah*) was the son of Hilkiah, the priest, and he was born at Anathoth (the city of the priests, which is thought to be the same place as Nob, where Saul slew all the priests). It was in the tribe of Benjamin, on the hill behind the Mount of Olives, only an hour's walk from Jerusalem. He was a priest as well as a prophet.

He began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, King of Judah, and on to the eleventh year of Zedekiah, "unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month." So he lived through all the troubles, and was put into prison for telling the people what was coming upon them.

He was not taken captive; but a few people who were left came to him, and made him ask God if they should go down to Egypt to save themselves. And they waited at Bethlehem for him to ask God, who said they were not to go, and He would defend them; but they said

Jeremiah spoke falsely: so they went to Egypt, and took him with them, and there, it is supposed, they put him to death.

NOTES.—*Nineveh*, one of the oldest cities in the world, founded just after the flood, on the River Tigris: it was so large that it took a man three days to walk round it. *Tarshish* was in the south of Spain.

QUESTIONS.

Who was Jonah? Where did God send him? Why did he not go? How large was Nineveh? Where was it? Where did Jonah go? What happened to him? How did he escape drowning? What did God order the second time? What did the Ninevites do? What was the result? Why did God spare Nineveh? Why did not Jonah like it? How did God reprove him? What are the names of the other prophets before the captivity? What do you know about Amos? and Isaiah? Who was Jeremiah? When did he live? How was he treated? Where did he die?

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

Thy neighbour? It is he whom thou
Hast power to aid and bless,
Whose aching heart or burning brow
Thy soothing hand may press.

Thy neighbour? 'Tis the fainting poor,
Whose eye with want is dim,
Whom hunger sends from door to door;
Go thou and succour him.

Thy neighbour? 'Tis that weary man,
Whose years are at their brim,
Bent low with sickness, cares, and pain;
Go thou and comfort him.

Thy neighbour? 'Tis the heart bereft
Of every earthly gem;
Widow and orphan, helpless left;
Go thou and shelter them.

Thy neighbour? Yonder toiling slave,
Fettered in thought and limb,
Whose hopes are all beyond the grave;
Go thou and ransom him.

Oh! pass not, pass not heedless by,
Perhaps thou canst redeem
The breaking heart from misery;
Oh! share thy lot with him.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

THE RECHABITES.

THERE were some people called Kenites, who lived in tents amongst the Israelites. Jael, who drove the nail through Sisera's head, when he was asleep in her tent, was the wife of Heber, the Kenite.

These Kenites were the children of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, and so the people of Israel let them live in the land; but they did not give them any possession. They moved about with their tents from place to place.

But in the days of Jehoiakim, King of Judah, when Ne-bu-chad-nez-zar came up with his army, these Kenites were obliged to go into some town, where they could be safe from the Assyrian army; so they moved their tents inside the walls of Jerusalem, for fear of the army of the Chaldeans, and for fear of the army of the Syrians.

They were very quiet, peaceable people, and they were always good friends to the Israelites; but they never altered their ways of living, and they served God, as Jethro had done, and never took to the worship of Baal, or those other idols that the children of Israel worshipped.

When they were living in Jerusalem, just before it

was taken by the Assyrians and destroyed, God sent the prophet Jeremiah to one tribe of these Kenites. They were called Rechabites; because Rechab was the old chief of that tribe, and Jonadab was his son, who joined Jehu in killing the worshippers of Baal.

"The word which came unto Jeremiah from the Lord in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, King of Judah, saying,

"Go unto the house of the Rechabites, and speak unto them, and bring them into the house of the Lord, into one of the chambers, and give them wine to drink.

"Then I took the whole house of the Rechabites;

"And I brought them into the house of the Lord, into the chamber of the sons of Hanan:

"And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechabites pots full of wine and cups, and I said unto them, Drink ye wine.

"But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye nor your sons for ever:

"Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers.

"Thus have we obeyed the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he hath charged us, to drink no wine, all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters;

"Nor to build houses for us to dwell in: neither have we vineyard, nor field, nor seed:

"But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Jonadab our father commanded us.

"Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah, saying,

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words? saith the Lord.

"The words of Jonadab the son of Rechab, that he

commanded his sons not to drink wine, are performed; for unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment: notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me.

"I have sent also unto you all my servants the prophets, rising up early and sending them, saying, Return ye now every man from his evil way, and amend your doings, and go not after other gods to serve them, and ye shall dwell in the land which I have given to you and to your fathers: but ye have not inclined your ear, nor hearkened unto me.

"Because the sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have performed the commandment of their father, which he commanded them; but this people hath not hearkened unto me:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring upon Judah and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the evil that I have pronounced against them: because I have spoken unto them, but they have not heard; and I have called unto them, but they have not answered.

"And Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Because ye have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according unto all that he hath commanded you:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." (Jer. xxxv.)

So God made these Rechabites an example to those who lived at Jerusalem. He was their father, and He had ordered them to have peculiar customs of their own, and always to keep to them, and not to do as the nations around them, and not to serve idols or heathen gods; but they had not obeyed God's orders, like the Rechabites, who kept those of their father. The Rechabites still kept their old customs, living just as they used to live in the desert: but the Israelites got to live like the heathen, and to serve idol gods; so God said He would punish them.

QUESTIONS.

Who were the Kenites? How did they live? What had Jael done? What made them go to Jerusalem? What sort of people were they? Who were the Rechabites? What do you know of Jonadab? What had he ordered them? Whom did God send to them? What was he to do? Why did not they drink wine? What other orders of their father had they obeyed? How did God praise them for it? What did He promise them? How did He make them an example to the people of Jerusalem? How had the Jews neglected the orders of their father? Who was their father? What was to be their punishment?

MY FATHER.

GREAT GOD! and wilt Thou condescend
To be my father and my friend?
I a poor child, and Thou so high,
The Lord of earth, and air, and sky!

Art Thou my Father? Canst Thou bear
To hear my poor imperfect prayer?
Or wilt Thou listen to the praise
That such a one as I can raise?

Art Thou my Father? Let me be
A meek obedient child to Thee;
And try in word, and deed, and thought,
To serve and please Thee as I ought.

Art Thou my Father? I'll depend
Upon the care of such a friend;
And only wish to do and be
Whatever seemeth good to Thee.

Art Thou my Father? Then at last,
When all my days on earth are past,
Send down and take me in Thy love,
To be Thy better child above.

Taylor.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE PROPHETS OF THE CAPTIVITY.

HAB-AK-KUK (*embrace*) is said by the Jews to be that son of the Shunammite woman whom Elisha restored to life; nothing is known for certain about him.

He prophesied during the captivity; though some think it was in the reign of Manasseh, King of Judah. His book is poetry, and was set to music.

DANIEL (*Judge of God*) was not a priest, but one of the princes of the royal family of Judah, who was carried captive, when quite a young man, to Babylon, and was brought up in the palace.

He rose to high honour with the king, and in his old age he prophesied what should happen to all the great kingdoms of the world up to the coming of Christ, and how long Christ should live on the earth. Some people think he foretold when the end of the world should be. He died in Babylon when very old.

OBADIAH (*worshipper of Jehovah*) very likely prophesied between the fall of Jerusalem and the conquest of Edom, five years later. His book only contains one chapter, which speaks of the fate of Edom (the kingdom of the sons of Esau), who had always been such bitter foes to Israel.

EZEKIEL (*God will strengthen*) was the son of Buzi, of whom we know nothing but his name. Some people say he was the servant of Jeremiah. He was a priest like Jeremiah.

He prophesied quite at the end of Jeremiah's time, during the captivity. He was carried away to Babylon in the reign of Je-hoi-a-kim (eight years later than Daniel), with other noble prisoners, and settled on the banks of the River Che-bar, where he saw wonderful visions. His book is long and very hard to understand. He foretells the resurrection of our bodies, and the fate of many great nations.

HAGGAI (*festive*), ZECHARIAH (*whom Jehovah remem-*

bers), MALACHI (*Messenger of Jehovah*) prophesied after the return of the Jews from captivity. They came back from Babylon either with the first lot of captives, in the time of Cyrus, or more likely a few years later. They found the people afraid to continue building the temple, and they stirred up a revival, and caused them to begin it again, and got the help of the king of Babylon; so the temple was finished.

QUESTIONS.

Name the prophets who lived during the captivity. Who was Daniel? Where did he die? What were his prophecies about? What is the shortest prophecy? When did Obadiah live? Who was Ezekiel? Where did he prophesy? Where did he live? What did he see there? Name the prophets after the captivity? What does *Malachi* mean? What good thing did the other two do?

CHAPTER LXXV.

THE CAPTIVITY.—DANIEL.

THE prophet Daniel was descended from the royal family of David. When twenty years old he, with many others, was carried captive to Babylon. He was a good looking youth, and he resided at the court of Neb-u-chad-nez-zar with his three companions, Shadrach, Me-shach, and Abed-nego.

The four youths attained to high positions, and during the three years of their training abstained from meat and wine, lived on the coarsest fare, and yet proved comely and well-favoured. In time they became of the first rank and importance in Babylon, for God was with them.

“As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.”

Neb-u-chad-nez-zar dreamt a dream which troubled

him much. All his wise men were ordered to explain it, but the king had forgotten it; and when they failed to recall and explain it he threatened them with death. On this being made known to Daniel, he, with his three companions, offered up earnest prayer to God, and He told them the dream and its meaning.

Neb-u-chad-nez-zar was filled with awe at their wonderful knowledge, and he heaped upon Daniel and his friends the highest honours. A few years after Daniel was called upon to interpret another dream of Nebuchadnezzar's.



DANIEL INTERPRETETH THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL.

Afterwards he was called upon to interpret the handwriting upon the wall of Belshazzar's palace on the occasion of an impious feast given by that monarch.

Bel-shaz-zar made a great feast for his nobles, and offended God by sending for the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem, and allowing his guests to drink from them to the honour of their gods. But suddenly a hand was seen writing

mysterious words on the palace wall. Belshazzar in alarm called for his wise men, but they could not read the words. Daniel being sent for declared that these messages were contained in the words:—

MENE, *God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it.*

TEKEL, *thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.*

PERES, *thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.*

That very night Babylon was taken, Belshazzar was slain, and his kingdom transferred to Darius the Mede.

NOTES.—*Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego*—These were names given to these three youths after they arrived at Babylon. Amongst the Jews their names were Hananiah, Misael, and Azariah. Daniel's name was changed to Bel-te-shaz-zar. *They lived on the coarsest fare*—They refused the king's choicest food, and lived upon pulse (coarse grain, as pease and beans) and water. *Nebuchadnezzar*—Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which Daniel said meant that a day was near when he would be driven from his throne and from the society of men, and would have his dwelling with the beasts of the field, until he knew that the Lord God indeed ruled among the children of men. But he did not heed this warning; he still lived on in sin. About a year after, as he was walking in his splendid palace, he suddenly became insane. The mind of a man left him, and he had the feelings of a beast. Throwing away his clothes, he mingled with the beasts of the field, and remained exposed to the weather by day and night, till his hair was grown as eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws. At length, however, his reason returned to him, and with it the glory of his kingdom. Believing in the power of God, he began again the work he had left off, and died after a reign of 43 years.

QUESTIONS.

What became of Daniel when he was twenty years old? Why was he sent to Babylon? Who were his companions? How were they treated by Nebuchadnezzar? Give particulars respecting their food. Shew that *God was with them*. What led to their being brought under the notice of the king? How did he reward them? Give some account of Belshazzar's feast. In what sense was it an *impious* feast? Shew that Daniel's explanation of the handwriting was correct. Give an account of the *fall* of Nebuchadnezzar.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE CAPTIVITY.—SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, the King of Babylon, highly pleased with his success in war, made a golden image, the height of which was sixty cubits and the breadth six. Having set this up in the plain of Dura, he commanded that, at a certain signal, the people of all nations and languages should fall down and worship it, and those who refused should be cast into the midst of a *burning fiery furnace*.

In this act of idolatry Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would not join, though they were commanded by the king himself. Although nearly all bowed down to the monarch's image, yet the three companions remained true to the God of gods, and declared that He would deliver them both from the fiery furnace and also from the hand of the king.

The king was filled with anger, and ordered the furnace to be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, and the strongest captains in his army to bind the three men and cast them into the flames.

Now came the test of their faith. With all their garments on, they were cast into the furnace, and so great was the heat that the men who put them in were burnt by it.

The king was present to watch the awful sight; and, though the three men at first fell down bound in the midst of the flames, yet when he looked, expecting to see them destroyed, he beheld them free from their bonds, walking unhurt in the midst of the fire, and a fourth person with them in form like "the Son of God."

"Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth of the midst of the fire.

"And the princes, governors, and captains, and the

king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent His angel and delivered His servants that trusted in Him, and hath changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God.

"Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort.

"Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon."

NOTE.—*At a certain signal, &c.*—The sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music was to be the signal for the people to fall down and worship the golden image.

QUESTIONS.

Why did Nebuchadnezzar set up a golden image? When were the people to worship it? If they refused to worship it what was to be their punishment? What is a furnace? Who were bold enough to remain true to Jehovah? Who were these three men? How did their behaviour affect the king? Give a short account of their being thrown into the furnace. Why did they escape unhurt? Whom did the king see with them in the furnace? How was Nebuchadnezzar now affected? What great lessons do we learn from this history?

SOME MURMUR.

SOME murmur when their sky is clear
And wholly bright to view,
If one small speck of dark appear
In their great heaven of blue.

And some with thankful love are filled
If but one streak of light,
One ray of God's good mercy gild
The darkness of the night.

In palaces are hearts that ask,
In discontent and pride,
Why life is such a dreary task,
And all good things denied?

And hearts in poorest huts admire
How love has, in their aid,
(Love that not ever seems to tire)
Such rich provision made.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

AFTER THE CAPTIVITY.—DANIEL (*continued*).

PSAL. lv. 17.—*Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice.*

IN the time of Darius the Mede a council of one hundred and twenty princes was set over the realm, of whom Daniel was the chief.

Though old in years, Daniel still remained faithful to his God, and the jealous princes finding no fault in him, induced Darius to pass a decree ordaining that no one should offer a prayer to any God or man for thirty days except to the monarch himself, under the heavy penalty of being cast into a den of lions.

Will Daniel agree to this? Will he cease to pray to the God of his youth? We shall see.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

On this being made known to the king, he was forced to do with Daniel according to the decree; but he was very sorry for it.

"Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee.

"And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel.

"Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

"Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions.

"And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever!

"My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

"Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

"And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den."

"So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

NOTES—*And he sealed it with his own signet*—Frequently a ring

with some inscription on it was used as a seal. In sealing the den it is probable that the fastening of the stone which secured the entrance was covered with wax or clay, and so impressed with the seal that any violation of it could be detected at once.

QUESTIONS.

To what honour was Daniel advanced in the time of Darius? What was the fault that the princes found in him? Was this really a *fault*, or was it a good point in Daniel's character? What was to be the *result* if Daniel worshipped the true God? Shew that he did not care for it. Give an account, in your own words, of *Daniel cast* into the den of lions.

OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

ABOVE—below—where'er I gaze,
Thy guiding finger, Lord, I view,
Traced in the midnight planet's blaze,
Or glistening in the morning dew;
Whate'er is beautiful or fair,
Is but Thine own reflection there.

I hear Thee in the stormy wind,
That turns the ocean wave to foam;
Nor less Thy wondrous power I find,
When summer airs around me roam;
The tempest and the calm declare
Thyself, for Thou art everywhere.

I find Thee in the depth of night,
And read Thy Name in every star
That drinks its splendour from the light
That flows from mercy's beaming car;
Thy footstool, Lord, each starry gem
Composes—not Thy diadem.

And when the radiant orb of light
Hath tipped the mountain tops with gold,
Smote with the blaze, my weary sight
Shrinks from the wonders I behold;

That ray of glory bright and fair,
Is but Thy living shadow there.

Thine is the silent noon of night,
The twilight eve—the dewy morn ;
Whate'er is beautiful and bright,
Thine hands have fashioned to adorn.
Thy glory walks in every sphere,
And all things whisper, “ God is here !”
Anon.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

THE SAMARITANS.

THE ten tribes of the kingdom of Israel never came back from captivity, but were scattered about, and now they are lost, so that we do not know where they are. But the King of Babylon sent some other people that he had taken prisoners near his own country, to live in Israel ; and these people were heathens.

“The King of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Se-phar-va-im, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel : and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

“And so it was in the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord : therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them.

“Wherefore they spake to the King of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land : therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land.

“Then the King of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence ; and let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land,

"Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.

"Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.

"So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places.

"So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children : as did their fathers, so do they unto this day." (2 Kings xvii. 24-29, 32, 41.)

These were called Samaritans, and they became enemies to the Jews at Jerusalem, and they hindered them in building the temple, and would not let those who lived in Galilee go through their land up to the Holy City, to keep their feasts ; and "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans." You will remember that our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, "Ye worship ye know not what" (John iv. 22) ; and once when He wanted to go through their country to the feast at Jerusalem, they would not let Him, and James and John asked if they should call down fire from heaven upon them, as Elijah had done ; but Jesus rebuked them, and said, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of."

QUESTIONS.

What tribes did not come back ? What became of them ? Who went to live in their land ? From whence did they come ? What religion had they ? What did God do to them ? What did the king do ? What did the priest teach them ? How did they mix the worship ? What is said about them in the New Testament ?

CHAPTER LXXIX.

RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY.

THE Lord had said by the mouth of Jeremiah,—

“These nations shall serve the King of Babylon seventy years; and it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the King of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity” (Jer. xxv. 11, 12).

At the end of seventy years the King of Babylon gave a great feast, and used the sacred cups of the Lord’s temple, when the finger of the Lord wrote on the wall,



THE RETURN FROM THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY.

and Daniel told him that the end was come; and that night Cyrus took Babylon and slew Bel-shaz-zar; so the Lord “punished the King of Babylon and that nation for their iniquity.”

In the first year of his reign Cyrus made a decree, that the Jews might go back to their own land; and about fifty thousand of them did so, under Ze-rub-ba-bel, or, as he was also called, Shesh-baz-zar, a prince of Judah, grandson of Jehoi-a-kin. Jeshua the high priest went with them; and Cyrus gave them back all the vessels of the house of the Lord, five thousand four hundred vessels of silver and vessels of gold, and they took them back to Jerusalem.

In the second year after their return they laid the foundations of that temple in which our Lord used to teach. But the people who lived in Samaria wanted to join in building it, as if they belonged to the same people, and wanted to make one nation with the Jews; but the Jews would not let them, because they were heathens, and were not of the seed of Abraham; so the Samaritans tried to stop them, and at last they sent men to Babylon to tell the king how re-bel-li-ous the Jews had always been, and he had better not let them build up a strong city like Jerusalem. The building of the temple was stopped for a time, but they went on with the houses of the city.

In the reign of Darius, twenty years later, the Jews tried again, and got a new decree from the king, and he ordered those people who had hindered the Jews to help them, and the governors to give them timber, and stone, and money out of the taxes to help the work on.

Then the temple was finished in the eighth year of Darius; and they de-di-ca-ted it, and kept the Pass-over. But the old men mourned because this house was not what the temple of Solomon had been. They had lost the ark, and the two tables of stone, and the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod, and there was no longer the glory of the Lord sitting between the cherubims.

NOTES.—The *captivity* was from B.C. 606 to 536, i.e., seventy years. For the writing on the wall, see chap. lxxv.

them? What did they take with them? What was their first work at Jerusalem? Who wanted to join them? Why would not the Jews let them? What did they do to hinder them? How long was the work stopped? Who let them go on? What help did he order? When was the temple finished? What had been lost?

BLESSED BE THY NAME.

BLESSED be Thy Name for ever,
Thou of life the guard and giver !
Thou canst guard Thy creatures sleeping,
Heal the heart long broke with weeping.
God of stillness and of motion,
Of the desert and the ocean,
Of the mountain, rock, and river,
Blessed be Thy Name for ever !

Thou who slumberest not nor sleepest,
Blest are they Thou kindly keepest ;
God of evening's parting ray,
Of midnight's gloom, and dawning day
That rises from the azure sea,
Like breathings of eternity ;
God of life, that fade shall never,
Blessed be Thy Name for ever !

The Ettrick Shepherd.

CHAPTER LXXX.

EZRA.

EZRA, or ESDRAS (*helper*), was a priest descended from Aaron. At the head of a band of exiles he returned from captivity to Jerusalem. He brought back many of the vessels of the temple.

On reaching the holy city he was much grieved to find that his countrymen had been guilty of great sin:

Forgetting the law of Moses, many of them had inter-married with heathen nations.

Ezra was so pained that we read,

"And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished. . . . And I sat astonished until the evening sacrifice. And at the evening sacrifice I arose from my heaviness; and having rent my garment and my mantle, I fell upon my knees and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God, and said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to Thee, my God." *

And when Ezra had prayed, there assembled unto him many of the Jews, and he exhorted them to confess their sins to Almighty God, and to put their Gentile wives away from them.

And the people listened to his words. "Then all the congregation answered and said with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do."

After this he read the *Book of the Law* to the Jews, and instructed them to keep the feast of the tabernacles.

Ezra was well read in the Law and in the Scriptures, and was the writer of the *Book of Ezra*, which gives us an account of the *return* of the Jews, their settlement in Judea, and the rebuilding of the temple.

It is said that Ezra was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, and that he was buried at Jerusalem; but some assert that he died in Persia, and was buried near the River Samura.

NOTES.—An *exile*, one who is banished or sent away from his native soil or country. Ezra returned from *captivity*. Nearly 50,000 (42,360 and their servants) left Babylon for Judea, led by *Zerubbabel* and *Jeshua* the high priest, taking with them 5,460 of the gold and silver vessels of the temple, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken away, together with the gifts of the Jews who remained in Babylon. They also took 7,337 servants (amongst whom were 200 singing men and women), and 8,136 beasts of burden, viz., 736 horses, 245 mules, 435 camels, and 6720 asses. *Astonied*, astonished.

* For the whole of Ezra's prayer, see Ezra ix. 5-15.

QUESTIONS.

What was Ezra? From whom was he descended? How did he spend his early years? After his release from captivity where did he go? Why? What did he take with him? What sin did he find amongst the Jews? How did this affect Ezra? What was his prayer? What was the result of it? What may we learn from this? What is the *Book of the Law*? Give some account of the Feast of Tabernacles. What are the contents of the Book of Ezra? What is said about the death and burial of Ezra?

CHAPTER LXXXI.

NEHEMIAH.

NEHEMIAH (*comfort of the Lord*), of the tribe of Judah, was born at Babylon during the captivity. He became cup-bearer to the King of Persia.

He was greatly pained at the thoughts of the misery of Jerusalem, and he *mourned and fasted and prayed*.

The King of Persia being struck with the sadness of his cup-bearer, pitied him, and gave him leave to return to Jerusalem, to rebuild its walls, its towers, and its gates.

On his arrival in Judea, Nehemiah began his great work. The Jews commenced rebuilding the walls; but their work was hindered by their enemies, the Samaritans, who did all they could to stop it.

The Jews set a guard for the Samaritans, and worked with a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other, so that after fifty-two days the walls and towers were finished. Nehemiah then dedicated the whole to God who had so helped him.

After this he appointed proper persons to govern Jerusalem, and did many good things for the people. Amongst others he,

1. Made the Jews put away their strange wives;
2. Exhorted the Jews to keep the Sabbath—a practice which had been woefully neglected;
3. Crushed the *tyranny* of the great over the poor, whose lands had been mortgaged, and their children sold as slaves;

4. Caused the Jews to observe the Sabbatical Year;
5. Caused them to bring annual payment for the service of the temple.



NEHEMIAH ARMETH THE LABOURERS.

Nehemiah after being governor of Judea for about twelve years, returned, as he had promised, to Persia. There he staid for a few years, when he again revisited Jerusalem, and continued his important work until he died.

NOTES.—*Cup-bearer*, an honourable officer of the king's household. It was his duty to fill and bear the cup, or drinking vessel, to the king. *The Samaritans*—The heathen settlers in Samaria. (See chap. lxxviii.) Wishing to unite with the Jews in rebuilding the temple, they offered their assistance; but Zerubbabel and the other chiefs of the people refused it on the ground that the Samaritans were given to idolatry, and were not true children of Abraham. This refusal deeply offended the Samaritans, who now craved for revenge, and tried to throw every obstacle in the way of rebuilding the temple. *Strange wives*—Those who were not Jews. *Mortgage*, a *death gage* or pledge: a conveyance of property, as security for a debt, which becomes *dead* or lost to the debtor if the money is not paid on a certain day.

QUESTIONS.

What was Nehemiah? Where was he born? What is a *cup-bearer*? What grieved him? How did he shew his grief? What effect did it have upon the King of Persia? What are the *walls* of a city? the *towers*? and the *gates*? Who offered to assist the Jews in rebuilding the temple? Who were the Samaritans? Why would not the Jews accept their assistance? After this how did the Samaritans act towards the Jews? Name some of the good things which Nehemiah did for the Jews. Why did he leave Jerusalem? Shew that this was a good point in Nehemiah's character.

THE HEAVENLY REST.

THERE is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wanderers given;
There is a tear for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast—
'Tis found above—in heaven!

There is a soft, a downy bed,
'Tis sweet as breath of even;
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head,
And find repose in heaven!

There is a home for weary souls,
By sin and sorrow driven;
When tost on life's tempestuous shoals,
Where storms arise, and ocean rolls,
And all is drear—but heaven!

There faith lifts up the tearful eye,
The heart with anguish riven!
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven!

The fragrant flowers immortal bloom,
And joys supreme are given;

There rays divine disperse the gloom :
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn of heaven !

CHAPTER LXXXII.

ESTHER.

ESTHER was a Jewess, daughter of a captive in Babylon, where she was born. She was one of those Jews who did not return from captivity. Having lost her parents when very young, her cousin Mordecai adopted her, and supplied, in an admirable manner, the place of both father and mother.



ESTHER IS MADE QUEEN.

She afterwards became the wife of A-has-u-e-rus, the King of Persia. Her life and that of her cousin were

soon endangered. Mordecai offended Haman, the prime minister and favourite of the king, by not standing up when he passed, or paying him that respect which he desired. Haman, deeply offended, obtained from the king a decree granting him permission to put to death, on a certain day, the whole of the Jews residing in Persia. He also intended hanging Mordecai, and set up for him a lofty gallows in his garden.

Esther, the queen, hearing of these doings, pleaded to the king at the risk of her life for her country-people. At a banquet to which she had invited the king and Haman, she begged for her own life and that of her people, and then informed A-has-u-e-rus of Haman's wicked designs towards her cousin.

The king, yielding to the wishes of his wife, spared the Jews, and punished his minister, by causing him and his sons to be hanged on the very gallows that had been prepared for Mordecai; and ordered that Mordecai should be advanced to the post of prime minister.

"Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request:

"For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

"Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?

"And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen.

"And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

"And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which

Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon.

"So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

"On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy unto Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was unto her.

"And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman."

But as the decree which Ahasuerus gave to Haman could not be repealed, since it was part of "the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not," another decree was issued granting the Jews permission for two days to take up arms to defend themselves: the result was that the Jews slew more than seventy thousand Persians. During the remainder of the king's reign the Jews were treated with especial favour.

In remembrance of the Jews' being delivered out of the hand of Haman, the *Feast of Purim*, i.e., of *Lots*, was held yearly. On this occasion all Jews of every age and sex, who were able, were required to attend at their synagogues, and join in the reading of the Book of Esther, from a roll containing this book alone.

NOTES.—*Prime minister*, the chief or first minister. *Gallows*, a scaffold upon which people who have committed a crime are put to death by being *hanged*. *Banquet*, a grand feast. The decree could not be *repealed*, means that it could not be called back or revoked. *Feast of Purim*—So called from *Pur*, a lot: because Haman by the casting of lots had decided upon the days on which the Jews were to be killed. *To read from a roll*—Before the art of making paper was found out, people used to write on the leaves or bark of trees, on tablets, or on parchment. Tablets were boards thinly spread with wax, on which the writer scratched words with an iron pencil. If people did not care for their writing lasting long, they wrote on tablets, and when it was done with it was easily scraped off. But if they wanted to preserve writing for a number of years, they wrote it on parchment, with a pen made of stout reeds. It was from a roll of parchment that the Book of Esther was read.

QUESTIONS.

What was Esther? Where was she born? Who brought her up? Why did not her parents have charge of her? Whom did she marry? Who was the King of Persia's chief minister? Who offended him? How? How did Haman act? How were his designs frustrated? How was he punished? What was there remarkable about the decrees of the Medes and Persians? What resulted from the decree being made? How did the Jews keep this in remembrance? Give an account of the Feast of Purim.

GOD CARES FOR ALL.

Do you know how many stars
 There are shining in the sky?
 Do you know how many clouds
 Every day go floating by?
 God the Lord has counted all:
 He would miss one should it fall.

Do you know how many flies
 Play about in the warm sun?
 How many fishes in the water?
 God has counted every one.
 Every one He called by name
 When into the world it came.

Do you know how many children
 Go to little beds at night,
 Sleeping there so warm and cosy
 Till they wake with morning light?
 God in heaven each name can tell,
 Knows them all and loves them well.
From the German.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

AFTER THE CAPTIVITY.

EZRA had tried to make the people good. He set up judges for them that knew the law of God, and others to teach those that were ignorant.

It was for this purpose he opened syn-a-gogues in country towns, and drew up the form of worship there, as it was in our Lord's day, and as it is now among the Jews.

He also collected all the books of the Scriptures together, and fixed what were known to be God's Word, and what were not so known; and he appointed the reading of these books in the synagogues every Sabbath Day, and some one always to explain them to the people.

He set up schools for children in various parts of the country, that they might be taught the history of their people, and the commands of God out of the Scriptures; so that these were the first Bible classes we know of.

It came to pass that the people of Israel were respected, and their temple was held in honour by other nations, who often sent rich gifts to it.

When Alexander was going to conquer Asia he took Samaria, and the people became subject to him, and offered to give him their temple for heathen worship. But the Jews would not follow their example; so he marched with all his army to Jerusalem to besiege it.

Then the priests and elders all came out to meet him in their robes, but without any weapons. And when he saw these old venerable men, with their white hair and long beards, he said they were the men he had seen in a dream, and that their chief had told him he should conquer Asia.

Then the high priest told him that his victories over the Persians were foretold in their Scriptures; so he spared them, and he ever after held their temple in honour, and sent rich presents to it.

QUESTIONS.

What did Ezra try to do to the people? Why were synagogues set up? What was the worship there? What did he do to the

Scriptures? How did he get the people taught? and the children? What was the result? What great king came to Jerusalem? Why did he come? How was he met? What did they tell him? What did he do?

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

THE GREEKS.

ALEXANDER killed himself with eating and drinking when he was quite young, and his generals divided his empire amongst them, and it came at last into four great parts,—Greece, Asia, Syria, Egypt. Palestine was between the new Greek kingdom in Egypt, and the Syrian Greek kingdom, whose capital was Antioch.

The Jews came into contact with the Greeks, who were very immoral, and had all kinds of bad practices, which God's law forbade: but they were very clever and very learned. This made the Jews uneasy, because the Greeks laughed at them for being so strict and particular; and they told them they were behind the age.

Then a bad spirit sprang up amongst them, and they wanted to be like other nations, just as they did when they made Saul king: and the priests fell away too, and got very fond of heathen games and amusements.

At that time a man called Jason, brother of the high priest, went to the Greek king and gave him a large sum of money to make him high priest, and he promised to make all the people use Greek customs.

So the king put down his brother and made Jason high priest, who set up a big Government school in Jerusalem, in which they only used heathen school books, and no Bibles. Then he encouraged the young Jews to all kinds of immorality, and to despise the law of Moses.

After this the king An-ti-o-chus, on his way back from Egypt, took Jerusalem suddenly, defiled the temple, set up the image of Jupiter in it, and offered swine upon the

altar, and ordered the people to eat the flesh, which was forbidden by the Law of God. He wished to stamp out their old religion.

But an old scribe, publicly before the king, refused to eat, and he was beaten to death by the king's orders. Then a woman refused, and her seven sons followed her example. The king ordered the tongue of the first who refused to be cut out, then the skin of his head to be peeled off, and at last had him burnt alive before the face of his mother and his brothers; but they all died bravely in the same manner, one after another.

This refusal spread to the country, until one Mat-tathias, a priest, killed a Jew who was about to sacrifice like a heathen, and the king's officer also, who was there to enforce the sacrifice; and then Mat-tathias and his sons fled to the mountains, and all who would not give up their religion gathered round them, and they attacked the cities of Israel, and threw down the Greek altars.

When the old man was on his death-bed, he called his sons around him, and spoke thus to them:—

“Now hath pride and rebuke gotten strength.

“Now therefore, O my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers.

“And call to remembrance the works of the fathers, which they have done in their generations: and you shall receive great glory, and an everlasting name.

“Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and it was imputed to him unto justice?

“Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment, and he was made lord of Egypt.

“Phineas our father, by being fervent in the zeal of God, received the covenant of an everlasting priesthood.

“Jesus (*i.e.* Joshua), whilst he fulfilled the word, was made ruler in Israel.

“Caleb, for bearing witness before the congregation, received an inheritance.

“David by his mercy obtained the throne of an everlasting kingdom.

“Elias, while he was full of zeal for the law, was taken up into heaven.

"Ananias and Azarias and Misael, by believing, were delivered out of the flame.

"Daniel in his innocency was delivered out of the mouth of the lions.

"And thus consider through all generations, that none that trust in him, fail in strength,

"And fear not the words of a sinful man, for his glory is dung, and worms :

"To-day he is lifted up, and to-morrow he shall not be found, because he is returned into his earth ; and his thought is come to nothing.

"You therefore, my sons, take courage, and behave manfully in the law : for by it you shall be glorious" (1 Macc. iii. 50-64).

NOTES.—*Alexander the Great* conquered all the known world. He was a Greek of Macedonia. *Antiochus* was the descendant of one of Alexander's generals. *Jupiter*—The chief heathen god of the Greeks—"father of gods and men." *Phineas* was the grandson of Aaron (Numb. xxv. 7). *Jesus* is used for *Joshua* (see Heb. iv. 8). *Caleb* was one of the twelve spies, who "bore witness" to the goodness of the promised land.

QUESTIONS.

Who was Alexander ? What caused his death ? Who had his kingdom ? How were the Jews injured by it ? Who was Jason ? What harm did he do ? How did he get the power ? What did Antiochus do at Jerusalem ? How did he force the Jews to insult their law ? Who first refused ? Who next ? Who made the final stand ? How ? Who gathered round him ? What advice did he give his sons ? Whom did he quote as examples ? To what facts of history did he refer with regard to Abraham ? to Joseph ? to Joshua ? to Caleb ? to David ? to Elijah ? to Ananias, Azarias, and Misael ? to Daniel ?

CHAPTER LXXXV.

THE MACCABEES.

JUDAS MAC-CA-BÆUS took up his father's work, made David his example, and slowly gained ground, till Antiochus sent an army of 40,000 foot and 7,000 horse

and elephants, and bade the merchants of Tyre to come with their money to buy the Jewish prisoners, whom he was expecting to take. Judas encouraged his men, though he had only 3,000. They attacked the army in two parts, defeated it, and took, as part of the spoil, the money of the merchants. The next year they routed the army again, and marched to Jerusalem, where they cleansed the temple, and held a great feast for eight days.

Antiochus was in a great rage when he heard of this, and set out, vowing he would make Jerusalem one great graveyard of all the Jews. As soon as he had said so, he was seized with great pain in his bowels; but he made them drive his carriage so much the faster, that he might not lose his revenge, until his carriage was upset, and he was so hurt that he had to be carried in a litter. His body began to decay and to breed worms, so that the bearers refused to carry him, and he died miserably in the mountains.

Judas still fought many battles, but he lost many of his men, and found on their dead bodies some gifts offered to idols. He was so grieved at this infidelity, that he made peace with the Romans; and as soon as he had done so, most of his men were seized with a panic and ran away, and he, with the rest, fell fighting against their enemies.

This same family still kept in power over the people, till at last Herod the Great, who came from a heathen family of Philistines, but was adopted by an Idumean noble, married one of the Maccabees, and made himself master of Jerusalem. He then handed over the country to the Romans, who kept him in power in the hope of bringing the people over to the Roman government. He tried to make friends with the people by giving money to restore the temple; but he was really a heathen, and very cruel. He put to death his wife, and her father and mother, nearly all his own sons, and every person who had any power in Jerusalem; but he was very humble to the Romans, and did whatever they told him. So the Romans became masters of the land, and the Jews had to pay taxes to them.

QUESTIONS.

Who was Judas? Whom did he imitate? What did Antiochus do? What was the result? How did Antiochus die? What was he trying to do? What feast had Judas kept? Why did Judas fail at last? How did he die? Who was Herod? Whom did he marry? Who were his great friends? What was his character?

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

A PARABLE is a story of real life which might have happened, since it contains nothing contrary to our experience. It is not, however, called by this name, unless it is used to illustrate some religious doctrine or course of action.

There are very few parables in the Old Testament. The following seem to be all that can properly be so called, viz. :—

1. The little ewe lamb (2 Sam. xii. 1).
2. The two brothers striving together (2 Sam. xiv. 6).
3. The escape of the Syrian prisoner (1 Kings xx. 39).
4. The vineyard (Isa. v. 1).

But there are three more of a similar kind, though they cannot be strictly called PARABLES. They are—

1. The thistle and the cedar (2 Kings xiv. 9).
2. The trees choosing a king (Judges ix. 7).
3. Micaiah's vision (1 Kings xxii. 19).

All these latter three are used to illustrate some religious truth, or to direct us to some religious course of action; but they all relate scenes which are contrary to our experience, or, as we may say, are unnatural. The two former are more like *fables*, since trees are made to act and talk like *persons*. The last of the three is a vision of heaven and spiritual beings; but it is used by Micaiah as a parable.

A FABLE is a story used to teach some moral lesson: but it is not taken from real life; for very often animals, and even trees and plants, are made to talk, as if they were men and women.

A TYPE is a resemblance between two persons or facts not in words but in some act or object, which has a double meaning, one being literal, the other spiritual, the former only being seen by the natural eye, and the latter only by the eye of faith. For instance, Isaac being laid on the wood of the altar on Mount Moriah, given up by his father to God, and restored again to his father alive by the angel, was, to the *natural* eye, only a very wonderful escape from death, as the reward of Abraham's obedience; but to the eye of faith it was a type of Jesus being sacrificed on the wood of the cross, given up for that purpose by His Father, and restored to life again, when the angel came down from heaven and rolled away the stone from the tomb. So, too, Joseph seemed to his brothers only to have been got out of their way by being sold as a slave to the Midianites: but he was a type of Christ in many ways: for he was sold by his brethren for a sum of money, he was imprisoned unjustly by heathens, he was believed by his brethren to be dead, he was exalted to the right hand of power, and all this to save his family from death (Gen. xlv. 8).

QUESTIONS.

What is a parable? How many are there in the Old Testament? What three others are like parables? Why do we not call them parables? What is a fable? How does it differ from a parable? What is a type? Quote one not named in this lesson. Explain how Joseph was a type.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

1. THE PARABLE OF THE EWE LAMB

Was spoken by Nathan the prophet to King David, to shew him the wrong he had done to Uriah the Hittite, by having him killed in order that he might marry Uriah's wife. It was not to tell David of the *sin* he had committed, because he was well aware of that, and he

had confessed the sin to God in the fifty-first Psalm, which he wrote before Nathan came to him. The parable was God's answer to David's prayer; and it was to make David his own judge to fix his own punishment, such as he would have ordered to one of his own subjects who had done such an unjust act to one of his fellow-citizens. David was angry when he heard Nathan's story, and said the man deserved to be put to death for being so cruel and selfish: so he condemned himself to be worthy of death, and God shewed himself to be more forgiving and more merciful than even David was.

"The Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

"The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

"But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

"And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock, and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

"And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

"And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

"And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

"And I gave thee thy master's house, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

"Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in His sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to

be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife."

It is a very common thing in Jerusalem to see poor people keeping each a little ewe lamb. You cannot walk along the streets without seeing a boy or girl, sitting at a cottage door, fondling a little pet lamb, which is very often ornamented by little patches of coloured dye spotted about upon its wool, and a coloured ribbon round its neck. It seems to be the children's pet companion, like a favourite dog or cat with us: it lives in the house, is loved or prized by all the family, and seems to be "like a daughter."

QUESTIONS.

Who spoke the parable of the ewe lamb? To whom? For what? How had David confessed his *sin*? What did he fix as his punishment? Relate the parable. How are lambs treated at Jerusalem? Who was meant by the "lamb" in the parable? Who by the "poor man?" How was God more merciful than David? What punishment did He give him? How did David bear it?

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (*continued*).

2. THE TWO BROTHERS STRIVING TOGETHER

Was a story made up by Joab, who sent a woman from Tekoah (which was a town not far from Hebron), who complained to King David that she was a poor widow who had lost her husband, and had only two sons left for her support. These two sons, she said, had quarrelled, and one had killed the other: so being a murderer he had forfeited his life, and would be condemned by the law to be put to death: so she, a poor widow, would be left alone in the world with no one to keep her. She pleaded to the king for a royal pardon for her son, the murderer; and

the king was so sorry for her that he gave her the pardon.

But this was only a parable, to get from the king a pardon for another murderer, his own son Absalom. He was too just a man to pardon his own son, who had broken the law of his country by murdering his brother Amnon. It would have looked as if he had done it out of favour, or fatherly love: so people would have said he had one law for the rich and another for the poor. But when he had judged the case of a poor woman, whom he knew nothing about, and had given a free pardon to her son out of compassion, it shewed that it was not from *favour*, but from *mercy*. So the woman took off her widow's dress and claimed the pardon, which the king had given her, for Absalom, and he allowed it.

Now Absalom had run away to avoid being tried for murder; but when the pardon was got for him, he came back, and David let him come; but he would not see him, nor have him at the palace, so that he still had to bear disgrace for his crime, and that made him so angry, that he returned his father's kindness by going about amongst the people and "stealing away their hearts" from the king. He used to tell them how much better they would be if he were king, because he was young, and could look better after things than so old a man as David, so that they did not get their rights. Then the people got very fond of Absalom, and they joined him in a rebellion to drive his father from the throne, that he might be king instead.

But when the time came, the army of Absalom was beaten by the king's army; and as Absalom fled on his mule through a wood, his long hair, streaming in the wind, caught in the bough of a tree, while his mule galloped on, and he was left hanging there by the hair of his head, till Joab came up and ran an arrow through his heart and killed him.

"Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom.

"And Joab sent to Tekoah, and fetched thence a wise woman, and said unto her, I pray thee, feign thyself to

be a mourner, and put on now mourning apparel, and anoint not thyself with oil, but be as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead :

“And come to the king, and speak on this manner unto him. So Joab put the words in her mouth.

“And when the woman of Tekoah spake to the king, she fell on her face to the ground, and did obeisance, and said, Help, O king.



EASTERN FORMS OF OBEISANCE.

“And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, I am indeed a widow woman, and mine husband is dead.

“And thy handmaid had two sons, and they two strove together in the field, and there was none to part them, but the one smote the other, and slew him.

“And, behold, the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him that smote his

brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother whom he slew ; and we will destroy the heir also : and so they shall quench my coal which is left, and shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth.

“And the king said unto the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee.

“And the woman of Tekoah said unto the king, My lord, O king, the iniquity be on me, and on my father's house : and the king and his throne be guiltless.

“And the king said, Whosoever saith ought unto thee, bring him to me, and he shall not touch thee any more.

“Then said she, I pray thee, let the king remember the Lord thy God, that thou wouldest not suffer the revengers of blood to destroy any more, lest they destroy my son. And he said, As the Lord liveth, there shall not one hair of thy son fall to the earth.

“Then the woman said, Let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak one word unto my lord the king. And he said, Say on.

“And the woman said, Wherefore then hast thou thought such a thing against the people of God ? for the king doth speak this thing as one which is faulty, in that the king doth not fetch home again his banished.

“For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again ; neither doth God respect any person : yet doth He devise means that His banished be not expelled from Him.

“Now therefore that I am come to speak of this thing unto my lord the king, it is because the people have made me afraid : and thy handmaid said, I will now speak unto the king ; it may be that the king will perform the request of his handmaid.

“For the king will hear, to deliver his handmaid out of the hand of the man that would destroy me and my son together out of the inheritance of God.

“Then thine handmaid said, The word of my lord the king shall now be comfortable : for as an angel of God, so is my lord the king to discern good and bad : therefore the Lord thy God will be with thee.

"Then the king answered and said unto the woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, the thing that I shall ask thee. And the woman said, Let my lord the king now speak.

"And the king said, Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this? And the woman answered and said, As thy soul liveth, my lord the king, none can turn to the right hand or to the left from ought that my lord the king hath spoken: for thy servant Joab, he bade me, and he put all these words in the mouth of thine handmaid:

"To fetch about this form of speech hath thy servant Joab done this thing: and my lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth.

"And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.

"And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To-day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.

"So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

"And the king said, Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face. So Absalom returned to his own house, and saw not the king's face."

NOTES.—*Joab* was David's nephew, son of Zeruiah, David's sister. David made him chief captain of all his army, because in the attack on the stronghold of Jebus Joab was the first to scale the fortress. *Avenge of blood*—According to the law of Moses, if a man killed another intentionally, the nearest of kin to the murdered man had the right to kill him wherever he found him.

QUESTIONS.

What was the parable of the two brothers? Who made it? Who spoke it? To whom? What was David's judgment? Who is meant by "the heir?" What did the woman ask might be done with the free pardon? Why could not David give one to Absalom? What had Absalom done? Who was his brother? Where was Absalom? How did David still punish him? How did Absalom behave? What would you call his conduct to his father? What became of him?

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (*continued*).

THERE are two other parables spoken by prophets. One of these was to reprove the King of Israel for letting the King of Syria escape, when God had given him into his hands.

Ahab, King of Israel, had humbled himself before God, and the Syrians had been defeated once; but they excused the defeat by saying the God of the Hebrews was a god of the hills, and so had helped them by sending down a storm upon their enemies. They thought if they could draw them into the plain, they should have them in their own power, and the "god of the hills" could not help them there: so they brought up very great armies, till they covered all the plain of Esdraelon like swarms of grasshoppers, "a very great multitude."

So God said, He would shew them that He was not a "god of the hills" only, but of all the world; and He came down and helped the two little companies of the Israelites, that looked only like two little flocks of kids on the mountains, and He smote the Syrians, so that they all fled, and Benhadad, their king, was taken prisoner. Then he humbled himself before the King of Israel, and put a halter round his neck, and fell on his face before him, and offered to become his servant, and to give up Damascus to him. Then the King of Israel had pity on him, took him up into his chariot, called him his brother, and made peace with him.

But God was angry with him for doing so: because Benhadad had defied God, who had given him into the hands of Ahab to punish him for his unbelief.

3. THE ESCAPED PRISONER.

"A certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his neighbour in the word of the Lord, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man refused to smite him.

"Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the Lord, behold, as soon as thou

art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a lion found him, and slew him.

"Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man smote him, so that in smiting him he wounded him.

"So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised himself with ashes upon his face.

"And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king : and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle ; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man : if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of silver.

"And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the King of Israel said unto him, So shall thy judgment be ; thyself hast decided it.

"And he hastened, and took the ashes away from his face ; and the King of Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets.

"And he said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, because thou hast let go out of thy hands a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.

"And the King of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria."

4. THE VINEYARD.

Another parable is one spoken by God himself, through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah. It is taken from a vineyard, of which there were so many in the south of Palestine : and God compares that Holy Land "flowing with milk and honey," to a beautiful vineyard, of which He is the owner, and His people are the vines. Our Lord uses the same parable in the New Testament ; and on one occasion He calls himself the vine, and His faithful people the branches. But let us read what Isaiah says of Israel :—

"Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill :

"And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

"And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

"What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

"And now, Go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

"And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

"For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry."

NOTE.—*Go to*, an old English expression of repulse, which introduces the publication of a judgment and punishment of the guilty. It is the opposite of "Come now," which precedes an advance towards reconciliation.

QUESTIONS.

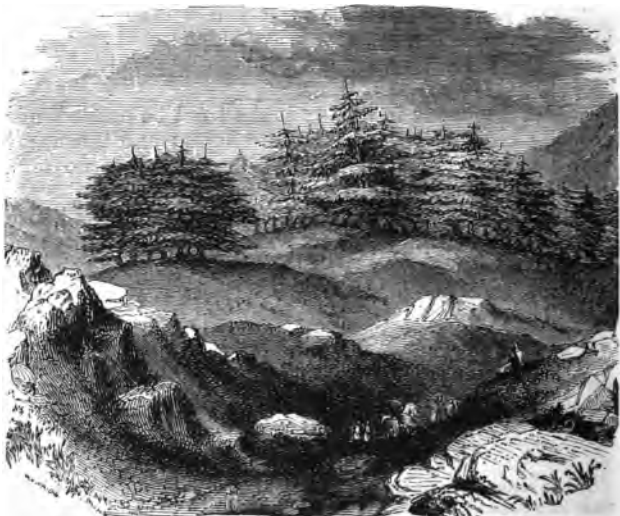
What was the parable of the son of the prophets? To whom was it spoken? On what occasion? Explain it. Why was Benhadad devoted to destruction? How did Ahab treat him? What is Isaiah's parable? Who is the "well-beloved?" What is the "fruitful hill?" The "vineyard?" Who were the "choicest vine?" What was "the hedge?" Why was it to be trodden down? How was this fulfilled? How are the "wild grapes" explained

CHAPTER XC.

PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (*continued*).

1. THE CEDAR OF LEBANON AND THE BRAMBLE

Was a parable spoken by Jehoash, King of Israel, to Amaziah, King of Judah, who had just won a victory over the Edomites, and thought himself strong enough to attack the King of Israel. The latter answered in



CEDARS OF LEBANON.

the words of the parable, to teach him how very small and weak he was in the eyes of other people, and that it was his pride only that made him think so much of himself, and that pride would be the cause of his fall. The moral of this parable is very much the same as that of the fable of the frog and the ox. It seems to partake more of the nature of a fable than that of a parable.

“Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of

Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, King of Israel, saying, Come, let us look one another in the face.

"And Jehoash the King of Israel sent to Amaziah King of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife : and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

"Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up : glory of this, and tarry at home : for why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee ?

"But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash King of Israel went up ; and he and Amaziah King of Judah looked one another in the face at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.

"And Judah was put to the worse before Israel ; and they fled every man to their tents.

"And Jehoash King of Israel took Amaziah King of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.

"And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria." (2 Kings xiv. 8-14.)

2. THE TREES CHOOSING A KING.

This illustration seems very like a fable. The trees are supposed to speak and act like human beings, and the moral has only a religious bearing from the fact, that God was at that time the King of Israel.

The circumstance occurred after the death of Gideon. The people wanted to make him king after his victory over the Midianites, but he refused. When he died, his illegitimate son, Abimelech, went to his mother's family at Shechem, and told them he was their "bone and their flesh," and he asked them to speak a good word for him to the people. So they did, and they gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the treasury of the house of Baal-berith ; and he hired with the money "vain and light persons, which followed him." And he

went to his father's house at Ophrah, and slew all his half-brothers, Gideon's seventy sons, except Jotham, the youngest, who escaped. He then went to Shechem, where he was born, called the people together under the oak tree by the pillar which Joshua set up, and told them it was much better for them to have one king than a great many, and he persuaded them to choose him. While they were doing so in the valley, Jotham came to the top of the rocks of Mount Gerizim, just over where they stood, and shouted out to them this parable. They could easily hear what he said: and he could quickly run away along the top of the mountain and down the other side, before they could either climb up to the height where he was, or go all the way round to meet him.

"All the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.

"And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

"The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us.

"But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

"And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, and reign over us.

"But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

"Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us.

"And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth god and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

"Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us.

"And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth yo

anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow : and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

"Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hand ;

"(For my father fought for you, and adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian :

"And ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother ;)

"If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you :

"But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo : and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

"And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother." (Judg. ix. 6-21.)

NOTE.—*Glory* means "boast," or "be proud."

QUESTIONS.

What was the parable of the "thistle and cedar?" Who spoke it? To whom? On what occasion? With what result? Who was meant by the cedar? Who by the thistle? What did it mean? Who was Jotham? What was his parable? Where did he speak it? To whom? Who are meant by "the trees?" Who by "the bramble?" What curse did Jotham call down on Abimelech? Why did he deserve it? How did Jotham escape? To what place? What became of Abimelech?

JUSTICE AND MERCY.

I SAW in my dream a countless throng
By a mighty whirlwind hurried along,
Hurried along through boundless space
With a fearful, onward, rushing sweep,
Looking like beings roused from sleep,
Till they met their Maker face to face.

Then consciousness waked in each dark eye,
The mercy-seat shone above on high,
And a timid, wild, but hopeful gaze
Those wandering spirits upward cast,
As if they had cause of joy at last,
When they saw the throne of judgment blaze.

"Justice !" they cried, with sound so clear,
The stars of the universe needs must hear ;
"Justice !" again, again rang out,
As of those who felt the hour had come
When earth-choked lips should no more be dumb,
And all God's world must hear their shout.

They were the souls of myriad men
Who had died, and none cared how or when,
Who had dwelt on earth as slaves—as slaves !
They were the men by death set free,
And flocking they came from their million graves,
They who on earth had scarce dared be,
Shaking the bonds from their half-crushed souls,
Uttering a cry that rent the poles,
For they knew that God would hear them then.

And afar I beheld a smaller band,
With hands clasped over their downcast eyes,
For before the blaze they could not stand,
And away had fallen their robes of lies,
Naked, affrighted, pierced with light,
They knew themselves and their deeds at last ;
From their quivering lips to the throne of Right
A faint low cry of "Mercy !" passed.

Justice and Mercy ! hear them both !
Bondman and master both are here ;
Each asketh that he needeth most,
Now pass from my soul, thou dream of fear.

Louisa J. Hall.

CHAPTER XCI.

PARABLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (*continued*).

3. THE VISION OF MICAIAH, THE SON OF IMLAH,

Is thought by some to have been a real vision which the prophet saw ; but by others it is thought to have been only a parable which he spoke of his own mind, to warn Ahab of his death, when all the false prophets promised him victory in the attack he was going to make on Ramoth-gilead.

Ahab had been very prosperous, and had beaten the Syrians many times by God's help. He wanted to get back a strong city that stood by the River Jordan, and the King of Judah promised to go with him to the battle and help him ; but he would not go till he knew what God's will was, for he was a good man. So they sent for the prophets and asked them. They all cried out, "Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

But Je-hosh-a-phat, King of Judah, was not satisfied. He thought they all spoke too much as if they flattered Ahab, so he asked if there were not any other prophet besides, of whom they might inquire. Then Ahab said there was one, but he said, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." However, they sent for him, and the man who fetched him tried to persuade him, as they came along, to speak pleasantly to Ahab, "saying, Behold now the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth ; let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good.

"And Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak."

At first Micaiah mimicked the others, and cried out, "Go and prosper; for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king."

Then Ahab put him on his oath, and he spoke this parable:—

"And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd; and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace."

And Ahab was very angry, and turned to Jehoshaphat and said, "Did I not tell thee, that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?" Then Micaiah told the prophets another vision that God had shewn him.

"And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.

"And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.

"And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him.

"And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.

"Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.

"But Zedekiah the son of Che-na-a-nah went near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the Spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?

"And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see in that day, when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thyself.

"And the King of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and to Joash the king's son.

"And say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in

the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction, and with water of affliction, until I come in peace.

"And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace the Lord hath not spoken by me, And he said, Hearken, O people, every one of you" (1 Kings xxii. 19-28).

QUESTIONS.

Who was Ahab? What king joined him? What place did he want to take? Whose was it? Whom did he consult? Who wished him to do so? What was the answer? Why was it not satisfactory? Who else was sent for? What was Ahab's feeling towards him? What did the messenger say to him? What was his first answer to Ahab? Why did he say so? What was the true answer? How did Ahab receive it? What vision did he relate? What were Ahab's orders about him? Do you know which prophet told the truth?

CHAPTER XCII.

MIRACLES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THERE are a great many miracles in the Old Testament. First there is the miracle of the Creation: the making of man out of the dust of the ground, and of woman out of one of Adam's ribs. Then there is that wonderful preservation of Noah and his family in the ark, when all the rest of the world were drowned. Next there is the birth of Isaac, and the angel staying Abraham's hand when he was just going to sacrifice him.

Then, again, there is the destruction of Sodom, and all the events which belong to it: such as the two angels smiting the men who were breaking open Lot's door with blindness; the turning of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt.

You will also call to mind the appearance of God to Moses in a bush, which burned with fire, but was not consumed; and the change of Moses' rod into a serpent, then back again into a rod. So, too, there were the ten plagues in Egypt, which we have named already;*

* See Book I. chap. xxv.

the dividing of the Red Sea, opening a passage for the Israelites to escape from the Egyptians. The pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, which went before the children of Israel as they marched through the wilderness.

Next there are the Miracles which were worked IN THE WILDERNESS. Let us see if we can remember them.

I. MIRACLES IN THE WILDERNESS.

1. Moses makes sweet the bitter waters at Marah.
2. Manna falls upon the ground every morning to feed the Israelites.
3. The wind brings up great flocks of quails.
4. Moses draws a spring of water from the rock at Horeb.
5. Moses fasts for forty days and nights.
6. God writes the Ten Commandments on two tables of stone.
7. Fire falls from heaven to burn up Aaron's first sacrifice in the Tabernacle.*
8. Nadab and Abihu are burnt by fire from heaven for playing at being priests.
9. The destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.
10. The consuming fire at Taberah (Numb. xi. 1).
11. Miriam's leprosy.
12. The budding of Aaron's rod.
13. Moses draws water from the rock at Meribah.

II. THREE CHIEF MIRACLES WORKED IN THE TIME OF JOSHUA.

1. Dividing the waters of the Jordan.
2. The fall of the walls of Jericho.
3. The Sun and the Moon stopped in their course.

III. THREE IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.

Two of these were to Gideon.

Those worked by God to save the Ark.

* Lev. ix. 24.

THREE IN THE TIME OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND
JUDAH.

1. The withering and healing of Jeroboam's hand.
2. The destruction of the Assyrian army in one night.
3. The Sun going back on its course fifteen degrees on the sun-dial.

V. THERE ARE THOSE OF ELIJAH AND ELISHA.

NOTE.—A *miracle* is something which happens by God's will contrary to the usual course of nature.

QUESTIONS.

What is a miracle? Name some of the miracles mentioned in Genesis. Some that were worked in Egypt. What two did Moses see in Midian? Give a list of those in the Wilderness. What were the three in Joshua's time? The two in the time of the Judges? Why were the next worked? Tell me the three in the Books of Kings. What others are there in the same books? Who worked them?

CHAPTER XCIII.

MIRACLES IN THE WILDERNESS.

THERE are four miracles worked in the wilderness to supply the people with meat and drink.

1. THE BITTER WATERS OF MARAH ARE MADE SWEET.

"So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; and they went out into the wilderness of Shur, and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

"And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah (*i.e. bitterness*).

"And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

"And he cried unto the Lord ; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet" (Exod. xv. 22-25).

2. THE PEOPLE ARE FED WITH MANNA AND QUAILS.

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel : speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread ; and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God.



QUAIL.

"And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp ; and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

"And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground.

"And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna : for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat.

"This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your per-

sons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents.

"And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

"And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.

"And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

"Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

"And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

"And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

"And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

"And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein.

"And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field.

"Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.

"And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?

"See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath,

therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

“So the people rested on the seventh day.

“And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey” (Exod. xvi. 12-31).

3. MOSES DRAWS WATER FROM THE ROCK IN HOREB, AT REPHIDIM.

“All the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their jour-



ROCK OF MOSES.

neys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

"Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?"

"And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?"

"And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

"Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

"And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?" (Exod. xvii. 1-7.)

NOTES.—*Quails*, small birds like partridges. *Omer*, about five pints. *Manna* means "What is it?" *Seethe* means "boil." *Massah* means "temptation," and *Meribah* "strife."

QUESTIONS.

How many miracles were worked to provide meat and drink? Where was each worked? What are quails? What was manna like? How much was for each man? What was the order about the sabbath? Why could they not get a double quantity another day? How did they get water? What was the matter with the water at Marah? How was it cured? What good tree was there in the garden of Eden? What bad tree? How did they get water at Rephidim? What was that fountain called? Why?

LIGHT SHINING OUT OF DARKNESS.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,*
And scan His work in vain:
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.
Cowper.

* John xiii. 7.

CHAPTER XCIV.

MIRACLES IN THE WILDERNESS (*continued*).4. MOSES DRAWS WATER FROM THE ROCK AT MERIBAH (*strife*).

"Then came the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, into the desert of Zin in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh; and Miriam died there, and was buried there.

"And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

"And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, Would God that we had died when our brethren died before the Lord!

"And why have ye brought up the congregation of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our cattle should die there?

"And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or of vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

"And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they fell upon their faces: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto them.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

"And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as He commanded him.

"And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?

"And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank; and their beasts also.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

"This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel *strove* with the Lord, and He was sanctified in them" (Numb. xx. 1-13).

QUESTIONS.

What was the last miracle worked to provide water for the Israelites? Where was it? What was the fountain called? Why? How did Moses "speak unadvisedly with his lips?" How was he punished? How had the people done wrong? Who were the only persons that came out of Egypt who entered Palestine?

THE PILGRIMAGE.

We are marching through the desert,
Away from Egypt's strand,
We are marching through the desert
To win the Promised Land.
The land we leave behind us
Is sin's abiding-place,
The land which lies beyond us
The Home of Jesus' grace.
March, march from Egypt's strand,
March till we reach the Happy Land.

Before us goes a pillar,
Still changing, yet the same,
It is of cloud in day-time,
By night it is of flame.

The cloud, it is the Manhood
 Of Jesus Christ the Lord,
 The flame, it is the Godhead
 Of Jesus Christ the Word.
 March, &c.

Two clear-toned silver trumpets
 Are pealing day by day,
 One trumpet calls the people,
 One cheers us on the way.
 The trumpet of the summons
 To Christ's baptismal bath,
 Christ's hourly Intercession
 The trumpet for the path.
 March, &c.

The flag of royal Judah
 Is waving in the van,
 Behind us in the rearward
 Floats high the flag of Dan.
 Christ Jesus, Judah's Lion,
 Is Leader of the host,
 Christ Jesus, Judge of all men,
 Defends the rearward post.
 March, &c.

Then raise aloud the war-cry,
 And wide our banners fling,
 A shout is heard among us,
 The shouting of a King.
 March on, march on straightforward,
 Look not to left or right,
 Christ Jesus, He will lead us,
 And we shall win the fight.
 March, &c.

CHAPTER XCV.

MIRACLES IN THE WILDERNESS (*continued*).

THERE are three relating to divine worship.

1. THE SACRED FIRE FROM HEAVEN UPON AARON'S FIRST SACRIFICE.

This was the consecration of the tabernacle, or God's acceptance of it as a place of worship, just as He afterwards accepted Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem.

"And Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings.

"And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people.

"And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces" (Lev. ix. 22-24).

2. THE BURNING OF NADAB AND ABIHU.

These two younger sons of Aaron were so pleased with their office as priests, and with all the grand things they had to do, that they went into the tabernacle to have a private service of their own, which God had not ordered. They were *playing* at being priests, and did not see how solemn a vocation God had given them.

"Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not.

"And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.

"Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

"And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

"So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

"And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people; but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord hath kindled.

"And ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for the anointing oil of the Lord is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses" (Lev. x. 1-7).

3. THE BUDDING OF AARON'S ROD.

The people murmured against Aaron, because he and his family only were priests. The people said *all* the congregation were holy, and the whole tribe of Levi thought they had as much right to the office as Aaron's family.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.

"And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers.

"And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

"And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you.

"And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, and every one of their princes gave him a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, even twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron was among their rods.

"And Moses laid up the rods before the Lord in the tabernacle of witness.

"And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

"And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the children of Israel: and they looked, and took every man his rod.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony, to be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me, that they die not.

"And Moses did so: as the Lord commanded him, so did he" (Numb. xvii. 1-11).

QUESTIONS.

What three miracles related to worship? When was the first worked? What had Aaron been doing? How did the people receive it? Who were Nadab and Abihu? How were they wrong? What did they do? How were they punished? Why might not their friends mourn for them? Why were the twelve rods put into the tabernacle? Whose were they? What name was on each? What was to happen to *one* rod? Whose rod blossomed? How long was it blossoming? What was that to shew? What was done with it? Who ordered it?

CHAPTER XCVI.

MIRACLES IN THE WILDERNESS (*continued*).

THERE are three which were punishments for rebellion against the authority of Moses and Aaron.

1. THE DESTRUCTION OF KORAH, DATHAN, AND ABIRAM, AND THEIR COMPANY.

"Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men:

"And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown;

"And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?

"And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:

"And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to-morrow the Lord will shew who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him: even him whom He hath chosen will He cause to come near unto Him.

"This do: Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;

"And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord to-morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.

"And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:

"Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?

"And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also?

"For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?

"And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab: which said, We will not come up:

"Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?

"Moreover thou hast not brought us into a land that

floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.

"And Moses was very wroth, and said unto the Lord, Respect not thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.

"And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the Lord, thou, and they, and Aaron, to-morrow:

"And take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the Lord every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censer.

"And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.

"And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

"Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment.

"And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

"And Moses rose up, and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him.

"And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

"So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and

Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

"And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind.

"If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me.

"But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.

"And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them:

"And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

"They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

"And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

"And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"Speak unto Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed.

"The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.

"And Eleazar the priest took the brasen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar:

"To be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that

no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord; that he be not as Korah, and as his company: as the Lord said to him by the hand of Moses.

"But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.

"And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation; and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared.

"And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation.

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.

"And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun.

"And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.

"And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

"Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.

"And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed."

NOTES.—Korah was a *Levite*, so he thought he had as good right to be a *priest* as Aaron. Dathan and Abiram belonged to the family of Reuben, *Jacob's eldest* son, so they thought they had more right to be rulers than Moses, who came from the *third* son. *Censers* were vessels in which incense was burnt. *Appertain* means *belong*.

QUESTIONS.

Of what tribe was Korah? What was his rebellion? How did God settle it? What happened to the 250 men with censers? What was done with the censers? To what tribe did Dathan and Abiram belong? Why did they murmur against Moses? What new thing happened? How were those three men killed? Who were killed with them? Why did the people murmur next day? What happened to them? How was the plague stayed?

CHAPTER XCVII.MIRACLES IN THE WILDERNESS (*continued*).

2. THE CONSUMING FIRE AT TABERAH.

"When the people complained, it displeased the Lord: and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled: and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost part of the camp.

"And the people cried unto Moses; and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, the fire was quenched.

"And he called the name of the place Taberah: because the fire of the Lord *burnt* among them" (Num. xi. 1-3).

3. MIRIAM'S LEPROSY.

"Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

"And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it.

"(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

"And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

"And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

"And He said, Hear now my words: If there be a

prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

"My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

"With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

"And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and He departed.

"And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

"And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.

"Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.

"And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

"And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.

"And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again" (Num. xii. 1-15).

QUESTIONS.

What caused the fire at Taberah? What does *Taberah* mean? How was the fire stayed? Who was Miriam? What do you know about her before this? Why did she murmur? Who was the "Ethiopian woman?" By whom else did Miriam say God spoke? What was Moses' character? How did he shew it? Where did God call these three to Him? What did He say to them? From what did He speak? What did He do to Miriam? Why would she be "as one dead?" How was she cured? How long was she kept outside the camp?

HE led me through the wilderness,
Along a lonely way ;
He soothed me with His tenderness,
And fed me day by day.

Oh, better far the wilderness
And desert way to me,
If wandering in its loneliness
I should be nearer Thee.

The Dove on the Cross.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

MIRACLES UNDER JOSHUA.

THESE three miracles in Joshua's time are all connected with the invasion of Canaan.

1. THE DIVIDING OF THE JORDAN.

"And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people ;

"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest),

"That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan : and those that came down towards the Sea of the Plain, even the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off ; and the people passed over right against Jericho.

"And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

"And it came to pass, when all the people were clean

passed over Jordan, that the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man,

“And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests’ feet stood firm, twelve stones; and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging-place where you shall lodge this night.

“Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man. And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel :

“That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones ?

“Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord ; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off : and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

“And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the Lord spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

“And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood : and they are there unto this day.

“For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan until everything was finished that the Lord commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua : and the people hastened and passed over.

“And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people.

"On that day the Lord magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

"And the Lord spake unto Joshua, saying, Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.

"Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan.

"And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before" (Josh. iii. 14 to iv. 18).

QUESTIONS.

What were the three miracles in Joshua's time? Who went first into the Jordan? What did they carry? What happened? How long did the water stop? Who came out last? What was *set up* in the middle of the river? What were brought *out* of it? What was done with them? What for?

CHAPTER XCIX.

MIRACLES UNDER JOSHUA (*continued*).

2. THE FALL OF JERICHO.

"Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

"And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.

"And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

"And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns; and the seventh day ye shall

compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets.

“And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.



THE WALLS OF JERICO FALL DOWN.

“And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark of the Lord.

“And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the Lord.

“And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams’ horns passed on before the Lord, and

blew with the trumpets; and the ark of the covenant of the Lord followed them.

"And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the re-re-ward came after the ark, the priests going on and blowing with the trumpets.

"And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

"So the ark of the Lord compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

"And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the Lord.

"And seven priests bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the Lord went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the re-re-ward came after the ark of the Lord, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

"And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

"And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

"And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city.

"And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.

"And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it.

"But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.

"So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

"And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

"And they burnt the city with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the Lord.

"And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho" (Josh. vi. 1-25).

NOTES.—*Straitly* means strictly. *Shut up* means besieged. Jericho was the first city God gave them, so it was to be burned as an offering to God, like the *firstfruits* of the land. *Rere-ward* is the hinder part of the army.

QUESTIONS.

What was the first city taken? What did God order them to do for six days? What on the seventh? What did He say should happen? On what day? What did happen? What were the people to do to Jericho? What to the people and cattle? Who was to be saved? Why? What was done with the silver and gold and brass and iron? Why was it all *accursed*?

CHAPTER C.

MIRACLES UNDER JOSHUA (*continued*).

3. THE LENGTHENED DAY.

"Now it came to pass, when Adoni-zedec King of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her

king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;

"That they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all the men thereof were mighty.

"Wherefore Adoni-zedec King of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham King of Hebron, and unto Piram King of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia King of Lachish, and unto Debir King of Eglon, saying,

"Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua, and with the children of Israel.

"Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the King of Jerusalem, the King of Hebron, the King of Jarmuth, the King of Lachish, the King of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

"And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered together against us.

"So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.

"And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

"Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.

"And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

"And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

"Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

"And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

"And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel" (Josh. x. 1-15).

NOTE.—*Discomfited* means threw into confusion. .

QUESTIONS.

How many kings attacked Gibeon? Why? To whom did they look for help? Where was Joshua? What did God tell him? How did he attack them? How was he helped? Which way did he chase them? What miracle did he perform? What was the effect? How long did the sun stand still? What does that mean? Why did Joshua want a longer day?

CHAPTER CI.

MIRACLES UNDER THE JUDGES.

THE chief miracles in the time of the Judges are THREE.

1. THE ANGEL'S SIGN TO GIDEON, in causing fire to burn his food.

"There came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the wine-press, to hide it from the Midianites.

"And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

"And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the

Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all His miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

"And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

"And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

"And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

"And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

"Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And He said, I will tarry until thou come again.

"And Gideon went in and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it.

"And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so.

"Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight.

"And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.

"And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

"Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites" (Judg. vi. 11-24).

2. THE LORD'S TWO SIGNS TO GIDEON.

"And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel

by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

"And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

"And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

"And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground" (Judg. vi. 36-40).

3. THE PRESERVATION OF THE ARK IN THE LAND OF THE PHILISTINES.

"The Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Eben-ezer unto Ashdod.

"When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon.

"And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

"And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.

"Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day" (1 Sam. v. 1-5).

Wherever the ark went it brought a plague and famine upon the Philistines, till they were very glad to get rid of it, and send it back to Israel; but we shall read of that when we come to the "history of the ark."

NOTES.—*Jehovah-Shalom* means "The Lord send peace."
Dagon was the "Fish-God," having the head of a man and the tail of a fish.

QUESTIONS.

Who came to Gideon? What was he doing? Where was he? Of whom was he afraid? What did the angel tell him to do? What sign did He shew him? Why was Gideon afraid? What promise was made him? What two signs did God give him? Explain them in your own words. Where was the ark taken? Where was it put? What was Dagon? What happened to him in the night? Why did not the priests tread on the threshold of Dagon's temple? What other evils happened to the Philistines? Why? What did they do with the ark at last?

THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

SWEET angel of mercy! by Heaven's decree,
So kindly appointed to watch over me!
Without thy protection, so constant and nigh,
I could not well live: I should tremble to die!

All thanks for thy love, dear guardian and friend
Oh, may it continue with me to the end!
Oh, cease not to keep me, blest guide of my youth,
In the ways of religion and virtue and truth.

Support me in weakness, my spirit inflame;
Defend me in danger, secure me from shame;
That, safe from temptation or sudden surprise,
I may mount the straight path that ascends to the
skies.

When Satan his snares for my ruin shall lay,
Be thou, gentle comrade, my comfort and stay;
And in ev'ry event that may happen to me,
Make all my desires with thine to agree.

When I wander in error, my footsteps recall;
Remove from my path what might cause me to fall.
Preserve me from sin, and in all that I do
May God and His glory be ever in view.

O Thou who did'st witness my earliest breath,
Be with me, I pray, in the hour of death;
Console me in sadness, refresh me in pain,
And teach me how best I may mercy obtain ;

That relieved by confession complete and sincere,
From ev'ry defilement afflicting me here,
All glowing with love I may gladly depart,
With faith on my lips, and with hope in my heart.

CHAPTER CII.

MIRACLES IN THE TIME OF THE KINGS.

THE chief are THREE, if we except those of Elijah and Elisha, which we shall read in a separate chapter.

1. JEROBOAM'S WITHERED HAND.

You know that Jeroboam had set up a golden calf at Bethel, and another at Dan. He made the people worship them, and offer sacrifices on the altar to it ; and he used to sacrifice to the calf himself, though he was not a priest.

" Behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel : and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

" And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord ; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name ; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.

" And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken ; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

" And it came to pass, when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against

the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him.

"The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord.

"And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before" (1 Kings xiii. 1-6).

2. DESTRUCTION OF THE ASSYRIAN ARMY.

The King of Assyria encamped near Jerusalem, and



THE OVERTHROW OF SENNACHERIB.

besieged it; and he sent a very haughty letter to Hezekiah, King of Judah, who took the letter up to the Temple and spread it before the Lord, and prayed

for help. Then God sent an answer to Hezekiah by the prophet Isaiah :

"Thus saith the Lord concerning the King of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it.

"By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord.

"For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

"And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred and fourscore and five thousand : and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

"So Sennacherib King of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

"And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that A-dram-me-lech and Shar-ezer his sons smote him with the sword ; and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And E-sar-had-don his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xix. 32-37).

3. RETURN OF THE SHADOW ON THE DIAL OF AHAZ.

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order ; for thou shalt die, and not live.

"Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying,

"I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

"And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying,

"Turn again and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears :

behold, I will heal thee; on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord.

"And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the King of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake and for my servant David's sake.

"And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.

"And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day?

"And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken; shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?

"And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees; nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.

"And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and He brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz" (2 Kings xx. 1-11).

NOTES.—*Rent* means split in pieces. *Afore* means before. "*The boil*" was the cause of Hezekiah's illness. *A light thing* means the same as "a little matter."

QUESTIONS.

Name three miracles in the time of the kings. Where did the man of God come from? To what place? For what purpose? Who was Jeroboam? What was he doing? Why did he put forth his hand? What happened to it? What did he ask the prophet to do? How was his prayer answered? What did God say of the Assyrian king? What was his name? What happened in the night? How many were killed? What are *corpses*? Who killed them? What became of Sennacherib? What message did Isaiah bring to Hezekiah? What did the latter pray? What sort of a king was he? What favour did God shew him? What was the sign? What did that mean? What was the illness of Hezekiah? What was the means of his cure? Who was Isaiah? What is a dial? Why was it a "light thing" for the shadow to go down?

CHAPTER CIII.

THE MIRACLES OF ELIJAH.

THE MIRACLES OF ELIJAH were fewer than those of Elisha, but they were more remarkable, for he worked them mostly by his own word; whereas Elisha generally used some means—for instance, the latter did not say to Naaman, “Be thou clean,” but “Go wash seven times in Jordan.” Again, he put a piece of wood into the water to make the iron swim, and meal into the pot to do away with the poison, &c.

The chief miracles of Elijah are six.

1. He made the widow's cruse of oil and handful of meal to last for more than a year.
2. He restored her son to life.
3. He called down fire on the sacrifice at mount Carmel.
4. He called down fire from heaven on two companies of soldiers and destroyed them.
5. He divided the Jordan.
6. He ascended into heaven in a chariot of fire.

Some of these miracles seem to have been worked by God *for* Elijah rather than *through* him; but they were all due to that prophet's faith, as was also his being fed by ravens at the Brook Cherith. We are also told in the New Testament by St. James, that the famine in the reign of Ahab was in answer to the earnest prayer of Elijah (James v. 17), and that “he prayed again and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” He was one of the few persons who, like Moses and Jesus, fasted forty days and nights, and in many respects he was very like Jesus; so that he is called a *type* of Him, for he was a prophet who was sent from God to preach repentance; he worked miracles, was persecuted by his own people, and ascended up with his body into heaven. This was why the Jews thought he would come again, and why he appeared to Jesus at the transfiguration, to shew that he was not the same person as Jesus.

His miracles are very interesting.

There are two at the house of the widow of Zarephath.

1. THE CRUSE OF OIL AND HANDFUL OF MEAL.

"And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying,

"Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

"So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.

"And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.

"And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

"And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son.

"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

"And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days.

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which He spake by Elijah."

2. RAISING THE DEAD CHILD.

"And it came to pass, after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.

"And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?

"And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.

"And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?

"And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again.

"And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.

"And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.

"And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."

NOTE.—*Loft* was the upper room in the house.

QUESTIONS.

How many miracles did Elijah perform? Name them. How was he a type of Christ? When did he appear to Christ? Why? What two miracles did he work at Zarephath? Where was Zarephath? What is a *cruse*? What is meant by *fail*? What happened to the widow's son? What did the widow think? What did Elijah do? What did he pray? What was the result? What was the effect on the widow?

CHAPTER CIV.

MIRACLES OF ELIJAH (*continued*).

3. THE SACRIFICE ON MOUNT CARMEL.

"It came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

"And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.

"Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.



CARMEL.

"So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel.

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

"Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men.

"Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under.

"And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that

answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.

"And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.

"And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

"And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.

"And they cried aloud, and cut themselves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.

"And it came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

"And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

"And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name: and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord: and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

"And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt-sacrifice, and on the wood.

"And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of

the evening sacrifice that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.

"Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

"And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.

"And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (1 Kings xviii).

The three other miracles performed during Elijah's ministry we need not repeat, as they have been already told in the life of Elijah (Chapter lxv.)

NOTE.—*Baalim* is plural, and means "The Baals," i.e., Baal and Ashtaroth, the sun and the moon—a male and a female deity.

QUESTIONS.

What idols did Ahab and his people worship? What does *Baalim* mean? What punishment did God send upon them? How long did it last? What offer did Elijah make to Ahab? How many were the prophets of Baal? How many of the Lord? Who was to have the first trial? What were they to do with the bullock? What was to be the test? On what mountain was it? How long did the prophets of Baal try? How did Elijah mock them? What more did they try? What was the result? At what hour did Elijah try? Why at that hour? What did he make round his altar? How much are "two measures of seed?" What did he put into it? Why? What was his prayer? What happened? What was the effect on the people? What became of the false prophets? What were the other three miracles he worked?

THE CHILD AND THE WIND.

"FATHER, father ! are you listening,"
Said the shepherd's little child,
"To that wind, so hoarse and hollow,
As it howls across the wild ?

"When I hear it in the chimneys,
When it sweeps along the ground,
'Tis to me as if deep voices
Mingled strangely with the sound.

"Now they louder swell and nearer,
Now they fall and die away ;
Can you tell me, dearest father,
What it is the wild winds say ?"

"Nay, my child, they are not speaking,
Not a word the winds impart ;
But each sound the Almighty sendeth
Hath a message to the heart.

"And that murmur deep and awful,
Couldst thou catch its voice aright,
It might whisper, 'Child, be grateful
Thou art safe at home to-night.'

"While for thee the red fire burneth,
Sitting by thy father's knee,
Many laden ships are tossing
Far away on the salt sea.

"Many mothers, sitting watchful,
Count the storm-gusts one by one,
Weeping sorely as they tremble
For some distant sailor son.

"They might tell of Him who holdeth,
In the hollow of His hand,
Gentle breezes and rude tempests,
Coming all at His command.

"He provideth our home shelter,
He protecteth on the seas—
When the wild winds seem to whisper,
Let them tell thee things like these."

Thus replied the shepherd father,
And the child with quiet mind
Had a thought of God's great mercies,
As he listened to the wind.

Mrs. C. Alexander.

CHAPTER CV.

MIRACLES OF ELISHA.

THE miracles of Elisha are more in number than those of Elijah; but are not so striking. They are chiefly these—

1. He divided the Jordan.
2. He cured the water of the fountain at Jericho.
3. He cursed the children of Bethel.
4. He brought water in the wilderness.
5. He multiplied the widow's oil.
6. He restored to life the Shunammite's son.
7. He healed the poisonous pottage at Gilgal.
8. He fed 100 men with twenty loaves.
9. He healed Naaman of his leprosy, and transferred it to Gehazi.
10. He made the iron head of the axe to swim.
11. He smote the Syrian army with blindness.

It is easy to remember these, though not in their proper order. There are five worked on the *water*, (two in the Jordan, one beyond it, and two at Jericho,) viz.—

(1.) Dividing the Jordan, and (2.) healing Naaman in the JORDAN.

(3.) Healing the fountain, and (4.) making the axe swim at JERICHO.

(5.) Bringing water for the army in the wilderness.

Three were punishments, viz. :—

(1.) On the forty-two children at Bethel for disrespect.

(2.) On Gehazi for lying and deceit.

(3.) On the Syrian army for disbelief.

Two shewed compassion on women, in giving oil to the widow and restoring a son to the Shunammite.

Two refer to food—one driving away poison from the pottage, the other feeding 100 men with twenty loaves.

All of these are interesting, and they all teach us some lesson, for they were written for our instruction. Elisha had prayed that seven times the spirit of Elijah might rest upon him, and his prayer was granted : so that he worked more miracles.

1. HE DIVIDED THE JORDAN.

His first attempt was to repeat what his master had done; and, taking up the cloak that fell from Elijah as he went up, he smote the Jordan with it, and called upon it, in the name of the Lord God of Elijah, to part, so that he might go back to his own home.

2. HE CURED THE WATER OF JERICO.

"And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.

"And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him.

"And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters: there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land.

"So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake" (2 Kings ii. 19-22).

3. HE CURSED THE CHILDREN AT BETHEL.

"And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.

"And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came

forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.

"And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria" (2 Kings ii. 23-25).

4. HE PROCURED A MIRACULOUS SUPPLY OF WATER FOR THE ARMIES OF ISRAEL.

Jehoram, King of Israel, went against the King of Moab, who refused the tribute he had paid to Ahab. And Jehoram sent to Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, to join him: and their two armies were united together; and they went through the wilderness of Edom. And they went round a seven days' journey to come behind the army of the King of Moab, and catch him by surprise: and there was no water for the host, nor for the cattle that followed them.

"And the King of Israel said, Alas! that the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

"But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may inquire of the Lord by him? And one of the King of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.

"And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him. So the King of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the King of Edom went down to him.

"And Elisha said unto the King of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the King of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.

"And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee.

"But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.

"And he said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches.

"For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.

"And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: He will deliver the Moabites also into your hand,

"And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.

"And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

"And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood in the border.

"And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood: and they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil.

"And when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country.

"And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees; only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it" (2 Kings iii. 10-25).

NOTE.—To *pour water upon the hands* of another was the work of a servant: so Elisha was the servant or assistant of Elijah, his master.

QUESTIONS.

How many miracles of Elisha are there? How many worked on water? Name them. How many were punishments? Name

them. Which shewed pity on women? What miracles did he work upon food? What was the fault of the water at Jericho? Where was there water with a similar fault? How was *that* cured? How was this? What sin did the children of Bethel commit? What was their punishment? How did Elisha save the army? For whose sake did he do it? Whom did he mean by "the prophets of thy father and of thy mother?" Who were his father and mother? At what hour did the water come? What other effect had the water? What did Israel do to the Moabites? and their land? Why did they stop up the wells?

CHAPTER CVI.

MIRACLES OF ELISHA (*continued*).

5. HE MULTIPLIED THE WIDOW'S OIL.

"Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

"And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil.

"Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.

"And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

"So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.

"Then she came and told the man of God. And he

said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest" (2 Kings iv. 1-7).

6. HE RESTORED THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON TO LIFE.

"It fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman: and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

"And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passeth by us continually.

"Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.

"And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

"And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him.

"And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people.

"And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.

"And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door.

"And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid.

"And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

"And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

"And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.

"Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. So she went, and came unto the man of God to Mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well.

"And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.

"Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?

"Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.

"And the mother of the child said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.

"And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked.

"And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his

eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands : and he stretched himself upon the child ; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.

"Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro ; and went up, and stretched himself upon him : and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

"And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out" (2 Kings iv. 8-37).

7. HE HEALED THE POISONED POTTAGE.

"And Elisha came again to Gilgal : and there was a dearth in the land ; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him : and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

"And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage : for they knew them not.

"So they poured out for the men to eat : and it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof.

"But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot ; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot" (2 Kings iv. 38-41).

QUESTIONS.

What is a *creditor* ? What was he going to do ? Why ? What was all the widow possessed ? What did Elisha tell her to do ? How did she get so much oil ? What did she do with it ? What was done with "the rest ?" Who lodged Elisha ? How did he reward her ? What befel the child ? Where did his mother put him ? Whither did she go ? On what did she ride ? Who went with her ? Who met her ? What did she say ? What did she do to Elisha ? Why was he troubled ? How did he rebuke his servant ? What did he set him to do ? With what result ? What did Elisha do ? What was the first sign of life ? What did he say to the mother ? What did she do ? What was the matter with the pottage ? How did he cure it ?

PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

GRACIOUS Lord, our children see
By Thy mercy we are free;
But shall these, alas! remain
Subjects still of Satan's reign?
Israel's young ones, when of old
Pharaoh threatened to withhold,*
Then Thy Messenger said, "No;
Let the children also go!"

When the angel of the Lord,
Drawing forth his dreadful sword,
Slew with an avenging hand
All the firstborn of the land; †
Then Thy people's doors he passed,
Where the bloody sign was placed:
Hear us, now, upon our knees,
Plead the blood of Christ for these!

Lord, we tremble, for we know
How the fierce malicious foe,
Wheeling round his watchful flight,
Keeps them ever in his sight:
Spread Thy pinions, King of kings!
Hide them safe beneath Thy wings,
Lest the ravenous bird of prey
Stoop and bear the brood away.

CHAPTER CVII.MIRACLES OF ELISHA (*continued*).

8. HE FED ONE HUNDRED MEN WITH TWENTY LOAVES.

"And there came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.

* Exod. x. 9.

† Exod. xii. 12.

"And his servitor said, What! should I set this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof.

"So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord" (2 Kings iv. 42-44.)

9. HE HEALED NAAMAN AND SMOTE GEHAZI WITH LEPROSY.

"Now Naaman, captain of the host of the King of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour; but he was a leper.

"And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.

"And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the King of Syria said, Go to, go and I will send a letter unto the King of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

"And he brought the letter to the King of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.

"And it came to pass, when the King of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.

"And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the King of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.

"So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

"But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned, and went away in a rage.

"And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

"Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

"And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant.

"But he said, As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused.

"And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord.

"In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant; that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing. And he said unto him, Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.

"But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God,

said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him.

"So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well?

"And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there he come to me from Mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.

"And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him.

"And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

"But he went in and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither.

"And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants?

"The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow" (2 Kings v. 1-27).

QUESTIONS.

From whence did Elisha get the twenty loaves? Why were they brought to him? Why did he give them to the people? How many were fed with them? Who was Naaman? What was the matter with him? What made him go to Israel? To whom was he first sent? Why did the king rend his clothes? How came he to go to Elisha? What did he expect? What did the prophet do? Why was Naaman angry? What did his servants advise? What was the result? How did he shew his gratitude? Why did not Elisha accept his offer? What did he give Naaman? What favour did the latter ask? What falsehood did Gehazi tell to Naaman? What to Elisha? How was he punished? How much are two talents.

NAAMAN'S SERVANT.

"Who hath despised the day of small things."

"Who for the like of me will care?"
 So whispers many a mournful heart,
 When in the weary languid air
 For grief or scorn we pine apart

So haply mused yon little maid
 From Israel's breezy mountains borne,
 No more to rest in Sabbath shade
 Watching the free and wavy corn.

A captive now, and sold and bought,
 In the proud Syrian's hall she waits,
 Forgotten—such her moody thought—
 Even as the worm beneath the gates.

But One who ne'er forgets is here :
 He hath a word for thee to speak :
 Oh, serve Him yet in duteous fear,
 And to thy Gentile lord be meek.

So shall the healing Name be known
 By thee on many a heathen shore,
 And Naaman on his chariot throne
 Wait humbly by Elisha's door.

By thee desponding lepers know
 The sacred waters' sevenfold might ;
 Then, wherefore sick in listless woe ?
 Christ's poor and needy claim your right !

Your heavenly right, to do and bear
 All for His sake ; nor yield one sigh
 To pining doubt ; nor ask, "What care
 In the wide world for such as I ?"

Lyra Innocentium.

CHAPTER CVIII.

MIRACLES OF ELISHA (*continued*).

10. HE MADE IRON TO SWIM.

"And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye.

"And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go.

"So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed.

"And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it."

11. HE STRUCK THE SYRIAN ARMY WITH BLINDNESS.

"Then the King of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

"And the man of God sent unto the King of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place, for thither the Syrians are come down. And the King of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.

"Therefore the heart of the King of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the King of Israel?

"And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber.

"And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold he is in Dothan.

"Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?

"And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

"And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

"And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

"And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.

"And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.

"And the King of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them?

"And he answered, Thou shalt not smite them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master.

"And he prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel" (2 Kings vi. 8-22).

QUESTIONS.

Why did the prophets want to build a new house? What is meant by *strait*? Of what was the house to be built? Where? What accident happened? Why was the man grieved? What did Elisha do? What was the result? What was his next miracle? Why were the soldiers sent? To what place? Who was afraid? What did Elisha pray? What did the servant see? What did Elisha bring down on the army? Where did he lead them? In whose power were they? What did the king ask? What was the answer? What was done to them? What effect had this on the army?

CHAPTER CIX.

MIRACLES OF THE PROPHETS.

THERE are three important miracles connected with the prophets, of which we have spoken already; but we will now read the account.

1. THE THREE CHILDREN IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

"Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent together together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

"Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

"Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the

king hath set up: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

"Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

"Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews.

"They spake and said to the King Nebuchadnezzar, O king, live for ever. Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth, that he should be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

"There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king.

"Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?

"Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made, well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?

"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning

fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

"Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heated. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

"Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

"And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

"He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither.

"Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

"Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be

the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God.

"Therefore, I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.

"Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon." (Dan. iii.)

NOTES.—*Flute* was a kind of whistle or pipe, blown at the end. *Harp*, *sackbut*, and *psaltery*, are all different kinds of string instruments. The *harp* was like a guitar, with ten strings; the *psaltery* was like it, except that the rounded body of the instrument was at the top and not at the bottom; the *sackbut* was something like it, but in the shape of a triangle, and having four strings; the *cornet* was a rod of iron, bent to the shape of a horse shoe, with cross-bars, on which rings were placed, which jingled when shaken; the *dulcimer* is thought to have been a wind instrument, like a bag-pipe. *Hosen* are stockings. *Astonied* means astonished, or stupefied.

QUESTIONS.

Who were "the three children?" What were their Hebrew names? Who was Nebuchadnezzar? What did he set up? What did he command? Who refused to obey? Why? What was the punishment? How were they saved? Who was the fourth person? What did the king order? What were the flute, cornet, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer?

CHAPTER CX.

MIRACLES OF THE PROPHETS (*continued*).

2. DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN.

"It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents, of whom

Daniel was first; that the princes might give accounts unto them, and the king should have no damage.

"Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him.

"Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.

"Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus unto him, King Darius, live for ever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

"Wherefore King Darius signed the writing and the decree.

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

"Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near, and spake before the king concerning the king's decree: Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any god or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?

"The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

"Then answered they, and said before the king, That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth thee not, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day.

"Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him.

"Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

"Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God, whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.

"And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

"Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

"Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

"Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

"And the king commanded, and they brought those men which had accused Daniel, and they cast them into

the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

"Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth: Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for He is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and He worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions" (Dan. vi. 1-27).

NOTE.—Daniel was more than eighty years old at this time, and had been in captivity over sixty years.

QUESTIONS.

Who was Darius? What high position did Daniel occupy? Who was Daniel? Who were jealous of him? What did they wish to do to him? How did they try to bring it about? What shews the blamelessness of Daniel's life? What law did they pass? Who signed it? What did Daniel do? Why did he pray *toward Jerusalem*? Who accused him? With whom was the king displeased? Why? Why could he not alter the law? What was done to Daniel? How did the king suffer? What did he do in the morning? What answer did Daniel make? What was done to his enemies? What did Darius order?

CHAPTER CXI.

MIRACLES OF THE PROPHETS (*continued*).

3. THE PRESERVATION OF JONAH FROM DROWNING.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

"But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he

found a ship going to Tarshish : so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

"But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

"Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship ; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper ? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

"And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

"Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us ? What is thine occupation ? and whence comest thou ? what is thy country ? and of what people art thou ?

"And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew ; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land.

"Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this ? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us ? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

"And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea ; so shall the sea be calm unto you : for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you.

"Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land ; but they could not : for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not

upon us innocent blood : for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee.

"So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea : and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (Jonah i.).

NOTE.—*Tarshish* was in Spain, on the banks of the river Gaud-al-quiver. The *fish* was a shark, which can swallow a man whole.

QUESTIONS.

Who was Jonah? Where did God send him? Why did he not go? Where was Nineveh? Where did Jonah go? In what ship did he take his passage? Where was Tarshish? What happened? What was Jonah doing? What did the captain say to him? What did he advise them to do? How did they know he had done wrong? How did they try to save him? What made them throw him over? How were they rewarded? What became of Jonah? What was the fish?

CHAPTER CXII.

DREAMS.

NUMB. xii. 6.—*If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.*

God often used dreams to make known His will to His people, or to warn them ; so we will take a few of the chief dreams that are mentioned in the Old Testament, and see what God taught by them. You will remember Jacob's dream, with the angels going up and down the ladder, which you have read before. Then there was—

1. ABIMELECH'S DREAM.

"Abraham journeyed toward the south country, and

dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister : and Abimelech King of Gerar sent and took Sarah.

" But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken ; for she is a man's wife.

" But Abimelech had not come near her : and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation ? Said he not unto me, She is my sister ? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother. In the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.

" And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart ; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me : therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife ; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live : and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

" Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears : and the men were sore afraid.

" Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us ? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin ? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done.

" And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing ?

" And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place ; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. And yet indeed she is my sister ; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother ; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me ; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother.

" And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and men-

servants, and women-servants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee" (Gen. xx. 1-15).

Abimelech did not know God. He was a Philistine of Gerar and a heathen, but he was a right-minded man. He had taken Sarah, Abraham's wife, because he thought she was his sister, and he wished to marry her; but he did not ask Abraham's consent; and Abraham did not tell him she was his wife; so both were wrong, and God set things right again by sending this dream to Abimelech.

QUESTIONS.

For what purpose did God send dreams sometimes? What was Jacob's dream? What was it to teach him? Who was Abimelech? What did he do to Sarah? How did Abraham do wrong? What truth was there in what he said? What did God say to Abimelech? How did he answer? What did God order him to do? To whom did Abimelech tell it? What excuse did Abraham make? What did Abimelech give to Abraham? What permission did he give him?

CHAPTER CXIII.

DREAMS (*continued*).

2. THE DREAMS OF PHARAOH'S BUTLER AND BAKER.

There were the dreams of Pharaoh's butler and baker, which they dreamt in prison, when Joseph told them the meaning; and it happened just as Joseph said. You read part of them before, we will now read the whole, and see why they were sent, and why God shewed the meaning of them to Joseph.

"And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the King of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

"And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and behold they were sad. Joseph asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?

"And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.

"And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.

"And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me: and in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: and Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

"And Joseph said unto him, This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place; and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler. But think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house: for indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

"When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good, he said unto Joseph, I also was in my dream, and behold, I had three white baskets on my head: and in the uppermost basket there was of all manner of bake-meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

"And Joseph answered and said, this is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days: yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

"And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his

servants : and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants. And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again ; and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand : but he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had interpreted to them.

" Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him " (Gen. xl. 5-23).

These two were sent by God to prepare the way for Joseph being brought to Pharaoh's notice, so that he might be made governor of Egypt, and make way for his father's family to settle in Egypt. So, when Pharaoh had two dreams, the chief butler recollected how Joseph told him his dream, and how it came true ; then he named Joseph to the king, who fetched him out of prison. One good turn deserves another ; and we never know when we do a good turn how it may turn out well for us some time.

QUESTIONS.

What two officers of Pharaoh were in prison ? Who was in prison with them ? Why did they look sad ? To whom did they tell their dreams ? What was the butler's dream ? What was meant by the three branches ? What by the butler's squeezing the juice into the cup ? What did Joseph beg him to do for him with Pharaoh ? What part of his history did he tell him ? How did it turn out for the butler ? What was the baker's dream ? What did that mean ? What happened to him ? What great feast was held on the third day ? What did Pharaoh do to the prisoners ? What good did Joseph get by it ?

CHAPTER CXIV.

DREAMS (*continued*).

3. THEN there were PHARAOH'S TWO DREAMS, which you also read in their proper place. You will remember he saw seven fat and seven lean cows come out of the Nile, and then seven good and seven bad ears of corn. These were sent to shew Pharaoh what was going to happen ;

so that Joseph might lay up corn in Egypt ready to keep alive his father and all his brothers.

But now we come to one which we have not read before, viz.—

4. THE MIDIANITE'S DREAM.

"And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto Gideon, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

"But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: and thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down to the host.

Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host. And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea-side for multitude.

"And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley-bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

"And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

"And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian" (Judges vii. 9-15).

This dream was sent by God to make the Midianites afraid; so that when Gideon's men blew the trumpet and shewed their lamps, the Midianites were so frightened, there was a panic, and every man killed his neighbour.

QUESTIONS.

What were Pharaoh's two dreams? Who interpreted them? What made him send for Joseph? What did these dreams mean? Why were they sent? What was the Midianite's dream? Who heard him tell it? Who explained it to him? Why was Gideon listening? What good did it do to him? How was it fulfilled?

CHAPTER CXV.

DREAMS (*continued*).

5. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S TWO DREAMS.—The first of these Nebuchadnezzar forgot when he awoke; but he ordered his wise men to reveal to him both the dream and its interpretation; and as they could not, he ordered them to be slain. Then Daniel begged for time, and prayed to God, and the secret was revealed to him in a night vision.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength,

and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

“Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure” (Dan. ii. 31-45).

CHAPTER CXVI.

DREAMS (*continued*).

6. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S SECOND DREAM.

“O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because

know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof.

"Thus were the visions of mine head in my bed; I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth: the leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, and all flesh was fed of it.

"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven: he cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him.

"This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.

"This dream I King Nebuchadnezzar have seen. Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation: but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.

"Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was astonished for one hour, and his thoughts troubled him. The king spake, and said, Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation thereof, trouble thee. Belteshazzar answered and said, My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies.

"The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the heaven had their habitation: it is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.

"And whereas the king saw a watcher and an holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, Hew the tree down, and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him;

"This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king: that they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.

"And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

"All this came upon the King Nebuchadnezzar.

"At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

"While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee; and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwell-

ing shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will.

"The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

"And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?

"At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

"Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment: and those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Dan. iv. 9-37).

QUESTIONS.

What great image did Nebuchadnezzar see in a dream? Of what was its head made? its breast and arms? its body? What were its legs and its feet? How many kingdoms did this foretell? What happened to the image? What would happen to the kingdom? What was the stone cut out without hands? How big did it grow? What other dream did he have? What did it mean? How did it come to pass? Who tells the dream? Whom did Nebuchadnezzar praise?

CHAPTER CXVII.

AN EMBLEM *:—THE LORD WAS MY STAY.

He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay.—PSALM xviii. 17, 18.

THIS is part of one of the Psalms of David. The Psalmist says, that in the day of his calamity the Lord was his STAY.

Let us try if we can understand what he meant by this.

You will remember who David was, and that Saul, the King of Israel, hated him, because he knew God had chosen him to be king instead of himself and his son Jonathan. He was so violent, that David was obliged to run away and hide himself; and Saul hunted him about in the mountains, and tried to kill him. Many a time he had very wonderful escapes, and twice he was tempted to kill Saul, when he was in his power, but he kept his hand off him, because it would have been distrust in God. In all this "the Lord was his stay."

Now we must see what he means by the word "stay." I daresay you have all seen peas growing in a garden. Well, when they get a few inches long, they begin to run along the ground, and do not grow straight up like wheat-stalks; so the gardener puts up some branches of trees on each side of them. He calls it "sticking the peas," and in a short time the peas begin to run up the sticks, and to cling to them, so that they get off the ground, and are able to hold up their heads as high as the top of the sticks, and so get light and fresh air. The peas, you know, have little fibres or feelers, called tendrils, and they catch hold of the sticks with these,

* This lesson is written out as a specimen. The teacher can easily form such lessons from the subjects given at the end of this chapter.

and curl them round the stick, and these hold them up. They could not get held up if it were not for the sticks, because then the tendrils would have nothing to catch to. So the sticks are what hold them up steady. They *prop* them up or *stay* them; for *stay* means the same as *prop* or *support*. You know women wear stays to support them; and a lame little boy, whose legs are weak, has two crutches under his arms to support him. Those crutches are *stays*.

Sometimes when a house is in danger of tumbling, or the bank of a reservoir is likely to burst, people put up great slanting beams of wood to prop it up, and they call those "stays," because they support it. If any of you know anything about ships, you will know that there is part of the rigging which is kept up by certain ropes, which are called "stays."

Some of you will remember, too, that when the Israelites were fighting once in the wilderness, Moses went up to the top of a mountain and prayed to God for them, and as long as he held up his hands in prayer, Israel prevailed; but whenever he stopped praying and let down his hands, Amalek prevailed. At last his arms got tired, and he could not hold them up any longer, so Israel would have been beaten; but Aaron and Hur came, one on each side, and *stayed* up his hands—i.e., they supported them, held them up for him.

So, you see, anything to which we cling or lean for support is a "stay;" anything that holds up what is too weak to stand up by itself is a "stay."

"He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the Lord was my stay."

David speaks of enemies that he had to face, who were stronger than himself, who got before him (that is the meaning of *prevented*); and he looked for something to lay hold of, which could support him and keep him from falling. He was like the pea-stalks when a violent wind was blowing upon them.

We saw that the pea had little fibres or holders to catch by, and if we were to break these, or the pea loosed

its hold, it would fall to the ground again. David knew that if he could hold on to God, He would hold him up, so that he should not fall down before his enemies. David's feelers were his faith and his prayers, which laid hold of God, and kept him up, so that when he was inclined to feel down-hearted he was held up; when Saul threw a javelin at him, it struck the wall; when he came with an army, David got out of his way; and when Saul was asleep in a cave by himself, and David and his men found him there, and he could have killed him in a minute, God stayed his hand, that he should not take the life of the Lord's anointed before his time.

So in all his troubles and dangers the Lord was his stay, and at last He lifted him up to the throne, and made him higher than all the rest of his people in the sunshine of God's favour.

Rev. J. Ridgway.

THE CHILD'S FIRST GRIEF.

"OH! call my brother back to me!
I cannot play alone;
The summer comes with flower and bee,—
Where is my brother gone?
The flowers run wild, the flowers we sowed
Around our garden tree;
Our vine is drooping with its load—
Oh! call him back to me!"

"He would not hear thy voice, fair child!
He may not come to thee;
The face that once like summer smiled,
On earth no more thou'lt see.
A rose's brief bright life of joy,
Such unto him was given;
So—thou must play alone, my boy!
Thy brother is in heaven."

" And has he left his birds and flowers?
 And must I call in vain?
 And through the long, long summer hours,
 Will he not come again?
 And by the brook and in the glade,
 Are all our wanderings o'er?
 Oh! while my brother with me played,
 Would I had loved him more!"

Mrs. Hemans.

LIST OF EMBLEM LESSONS.

1. As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. (Psal. xlii. 1.)
2. As an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. (Isa. xxxii. 2.)
3. As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. (Isa. xxxii. 2.)
4. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding. (Psal. xxxii. 9.)
5. As iron sharpeneth iron, &c. (Prov. xxvii. 17.)
6. As the grass that groweth up in the morning, and in the evening is cut down and withered. (Psal. xc. 4-6.)
7. I will refine them as silver is refined. (Zech. xiii. 9.)
8. Like a tree planted by rivers of water. (Psal. i. 3.)
9. Like chaff which the wind driveth away. (Psal. i. 4.)
10. Christ like a sparrow alone on the house-top. (Psal. cii. 7.)
11. Christ like fuller's soap, and a refiner's fire. (Mal. iii. 2.)
12. They shall mount up with wings as eagles. (Isa. xl. 28-31.)
13. Joseph is a fruitful bough by a well, &c. (Gen. xlix. 22.)

14. Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? (Jer. xiii. 23.)

15. His right hand is full of righteousness. (Psal. xlviii. 10.)

16. Like the rain upon the mown grass. (Psal. lxxii. 5, 6.)

17. The worldly man shall be like the heath in the desert. (Jer. xvii. 5, 6.)

18. The getter of unrighteous gain shall be as the partridge sitting on eggs, and not hatching them. (Jer. xvii. 9-11.)

19. The wicked are like the troubled sea, &c. (Isa. lvii. 20, 21.)

20. The stork knoweth her appointed time. (Jer. viii. 7.)

21. Brotherly love is as the dew of Hermon. (Psal. cxxxiii. 1-3.)

22. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. (Psal. cxxi. 5.)

23. Thy goodness is like the morning cloud and the early dew. (Hos. xiii. 1-7.)

24. Keep me, as the apple of thine eye. (Psal. xvii. 8.)

25. Compassed me about like bees. (Psal. cxviii. 8-14.)

26. Though your sins be as scarlet, &c. (Isa. i. 16-18.)

27. As an eagle stirreth up her nest. (Duet. xxxii. 10-12.)

28. I wait more than they that watch for the morning. (Psal. cxxx. 5-7.)

29. I am become like a bottle in the smoke. (Psal. cxix. 83.)

30. The bruised reed and the smoking flax. (Isa. xlii. 3.)

31. Like grass upon the house-tops. (Psal. cxxix. 6.)

32. I will be as the dew unto Israel. (Hos. xiv. 5.)

33. I will spread my net upon them; I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven. (Hos. vii. 12.)

34. In the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. (Psal. lxiii. 6-8.)

35. God is my fortress, high tower, &c. (Psal. cxliv. 2.)

36. God is our refuge, &c. (Psal. xli. 1-3.)

37. God is a sun and shield. (Psal. lxxxiv. 9-12.)

38. God brought me out of the pit and miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, &c. (Psal. xl. 2.)

39. The wicked are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff, that the storm carrieth away. (Job xxi. 17, 18.)

40. As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. (Prov. xxv. 25.)

SHORTNESS OF LIFE.

"We all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (ISAIAH lxiv. 6.)

SEE the leaves around us falling,
Dry and withered to the ground;
Thus to thoughtless mortals calling,
With a sad and solemn sound:—

"Sons of Adam (once in Eden,
Where like us he blighted fell),
Hear the lesson we are reading;
Mark the awful truth we tell:

"Youths, on length of days presuming,
Who the paths of pleasure tread,
View us, late in beauty blooming,
Numbered now among the dead.

"What though yet no losses grieve you,
Gay with health and many a grace:
Let not cloudless skies deceive you;
Summer gives to Autumn place.

"Yearly in our course returning,
Messengers of shortest stay;
Still we bid frail man be learning,
'Heaven and earth shall pass away.'"

On the tree of life eternal,
Oh, let all our hopes be laid !
This alone, for ever vernal,
Bears a leaf that may not fade.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth ; but the word of our
God shall stand for ever." (ISAIAH xi, 8.)

The Child's Christian Year.

CHAPTER CXVIII.

THE POETICAL BOOKS.

THERE are five books of the Old Testament, which are books of devotion, and they were used by the Jews at their religious worship. All these books are written in poetry, like hymns. They are the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Songs of Solomon.

1. The first of these, being written in the time of Job's great illness and affliction, is used by the Jews on their days of mourning and hu-mi-li-a-tion, or penitence. So on the day of the greatest Jewish fast (the ninth of the month Ab, about the middle of July), which is the day when God gave the order that all those who came out of Egypt should die in the wilderness, the Jews meet in the synagogues, sit all night in the dark, weeping and wailing their country's calamities till daybreak, when they pass the morning in reading the Book of Job, and in chanting solemn elegies of grief.

2. The Book of Psalms contains about fifty hymns, which were composed by David at different times in his life. The rest were written by other prophets on some great occasions. Solomon is supposed to have written some (Ps. lxxii. and cxxvii.), Ezra is said to have composed the one hundred and nineteenth, Moses the ninetieth and the following ten ; while Jeremiah is given as the author of the one hundred and thirty-seventh, and Haggai and Zechariah of the one hundred and forty-sixth and one hundred and forty-seventh. The first forty, and those from fifty-one to sixty-five, are said to be David's. It is probable that he collected them into one

book, and placed with his own some others that were used in his day. Hezekiah made a larger collection, and Ezra probably put them together in the order in which we have them now.

The word "psalm" means a "poem set to music," and you will find, that about fifty of them have a heading "to the chief musician" (i.e., of the choir at Jerusalem). They are all hymns intended to be sung, and they have been sung ever since David sang them to his own harp, and are still sung by Jews and Christians.

They are divided into Five Books.

Book I.	Psalms 1 - 42.
" II.	" 43 - 72.
" III.	" 73 - 89.
" IV.	" 90-106.
" V.	" 107-150.

The following psalms refer to events in David's life:—

1. Confession of sin after the death of Uriah, Ps. li.; again, after Nathan's parable, Ps. xxxii.; and during the war with Absalom, Ps. cxliii.

2. During his flight from Absalom, Ps. iii, iv., v., xlii., xliii., lv., lxii.; so that we see how deeply he felt his son's rebellion.

3. On his victory over Goliath of Gath, Ps. ix.

4. On Saul's murder of the priests at Nob (1 Sam. xxiii. 19), Ps. xvii.

5. On building the altar on Araunah's threshing-floor, Ps. xxx.

6. On the conclusion of his wars, Ps. xviii.

But there are others of great interest, because of the time when they were composed, such as Ps. lxxiii., when the army of Sen-nach-er-ib was destroyed in one night; Ps. xc., when Moses went up the mountain to die, after seeing the promised land, and which has ever since been the Burial Psalm of all nations; Ps. lxxix., written on the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem by the King of Babylon; and Ps. lxxxiv. on the foundation of the second temple. Ps. xcvi., cvi., and cvi., are supposed to have been sung in procession, when David removed the ark from the house of Obed-edom.

There are several curious words placed at the head of some Psalms, and we do not know their meaning; but it is well to know what is thought about them.

SONGS OF DEGREES are supposed to be those sung by the captives, as they marched joyfully home again from Babylon, and especially when they came within sight of home.

GITTITH was either a musical instrument or a tune brought back by David from *Gath*, where he lived in exile when pursued by Saul.

MUTH-LABBEH is thought to be for male-treble, and ALAMOTH for female-treble voices.

MAHALATH, NEGINOTH, SHEMINITH were probably *string* instruments, and NECHILOTH and SHOSHANIM *wind* instruments to accompany the Psalms, and so they regulate the sort of music (lively or solemn) to which they were to be sung.

SELAH probably marks a *pause*, or a swelling of the voice, *forte*, as it is called in modern music.

3. The Songs of Solomon are said to have been composed by that king on his marriage to the daughter of the King of Egypt; but some think that they were written in the time of Jeroboam, and that they are a lamentation of the faithful people in the kingdom of Israel, who mourned over the loss of the two tribes, and especially the temple (which was their "Love"), from which they were cut off by the separation.

QUESTIONS.

What are the "Poetical Books?" When do the Jews read the Book of Job? On what occasion was it written? How many Psalms did David write? Which? Who else wrote any? Who put them together into one book? What does "Psalm" mean? How many "Books" are there? Which Psalms belong to each? Tell me some of the occasions on which David wrote Psalms. Which are they? Tell me some occasions on which other people wrote some? What are "Songs of Degrees?" What was "Gittith" and "Alamoth?" What names of musical instruments are at the head of some Psalms? What is "Selah?"

THE STARS.

No cloud obscures the summer sky,
The moon in brightness walks on high,
And, set in azure, every star
Shines a pure gem of heaven afar!

Child of the earth! Oh, lift thy glance
To yon bright firmament's expanse!
The glories of its realm explore,
And gaze and wonder and adore!

Doth it not speak to every sense
The marvels of Omnipotence?
See'st thou not there the Almighty's name
Inscribed in characters of flame?

Count o'er those lamps of quenchless light,
That sparkle through the shades of night;
Behold them! Can a mortal boast
To number that celestial host?

Mark well each little star, whose rays
In distant splendour meet thy gaze;
Each is a world, by God sustained,
Who from eternity hath reigned.

What then art thou, O child of clay,
Amid creation's grandeur, say?
E'en as an insect on the breeze,
E'en as a dewdrop lost in seas!

Yet fear thou not; the Sovereign hand
Which spread the ocean and the land,
And hung the rolling spheres in air,
Hath e'en for thee a Father's care.

Mrs. Hemans.

CHAPTER CXIX.

PROVERBS.

A PROVERB is a short sentence teaching some moral truth or useful lesson in a concise form, easily remembered.

The Proverbs of Solomon are not only such short lessons, but they contain also some useful exhortations to virtue and godliness. *Wisdom* is used for *religious faith*, and *folly* for *unbelief*.

Solomon is said to have spoken 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings iv. 32), and they were written to "give a young man knowledge and discretion;" but the book is full of useful lessons both for young and old.

The following are a few of the most practical:—

A RULE OF LIFE.

I.

"Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.

"For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.

"For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

"He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

"Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

"Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

"Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

"She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

"Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

"I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

"When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

"Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

"Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

"Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

"For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

"For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. iv. 1-18).

II.

"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

"For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

"So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man" (Prov. iii. 1-4).

"Wisdom shall praise herself, and shall glory in the midst of her people.

"In the congregation of the Most High shall she open her mouth, and triumph before His power.

"I came out of the mouth of the Most High, and covered the earth as a cloud.

"I dwelt in high places, and my throne is in a cloudy pillar.

"I alone compassed the circuit of heaven, and walked in the bottom of the deep.

"In the waves of the sea, and in all the earth, and in every people and nation, I got a possession.

"With all these I sought rest : and in whose inheritance shall I abide ?

"So the Creator of all things gave me a commandment, and He that made me caused my tabernacle to rest, and said, Let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thine inheritance in Israel.

"He created me from the beginning before the world, and I shall never fail.

"In the holy tabernacle I served before Him ; and so was I established in Sion.

"Likewise in the beloved city He gave me rest, and in Jerusalem was my power.

"And I took root in an honourable people, even in the portion of the Lord's inheritance" (Ecclus. xxiv. 1-12).

CHAPTER CXX.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

WISDOM.

I.

"DOTH not wisdom cry ? and understanding put forth her voice ?

"She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

"She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

"Unto you, O men, I call ; and my voice is to the sons of man.

"O ye simple, understand wisdom : and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

"Hear ; for I will speak of excellent things ; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.

"For my mouth shall speak truth ; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips.

"All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them.

"They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

"Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

"For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

II.

"I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

"Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength.

"By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.

"By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.

"I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

"Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness.

"My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

"I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:

"That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

"The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

"When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water.

"Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

"While as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

"When He prepared the heavens, I was there : when He set compass upon the face of the depths :

"When He established the clouds above : when He strengthened the fountains of the deep :

"When He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth :

"Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him : and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him ;

"Rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth ; and my delights were with the sons of men.

"Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children : for blessed are they that keep my ways.

"Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.

"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

"For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.

"But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul : all they that hate me love death " (Prov. viii. 1-36).

CHAPTER CXXI.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

A VIRTUOUS WOMAN.

"Who can find a virtuous woman ? for her price is far above rubies.

"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

"She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life.

"She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

"She is like the merchants' ships ; she bringeth her food from afar.

"She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

"She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

"She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

"She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.

"She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

"She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet.

"She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.

"Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

"She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

"Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

"Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

"Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.

"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

"Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

FATHER, I know that all my life
Is portioned out for me;
And the changes which are sure to come,
I do not fear to see:
But I ask Thee for a present mind
Intent on pleasing Thee.

I ask thee for a thoughtful love,
Through constant watching wise,
To meet the glad with cheerful smiles,
And to wipe the tearful eyes;
And a heart at leisure from itself
To soothe and sympathise.

Miss Waring.

CHAPTER CXXII.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

PROSPERITY TO THE RIGHTEOUS.

I.

"RIGHTEOUSNESS exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.

"Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

"Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.

"Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is perverse in his ways shall fall at once.

"Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

"When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish there is shouting.

"By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

"The fear of the Lord is the first step to be accepted (of him), and wisdom obtaineth His love.

"The knowledge of the commandments of the Lord is

the doctrine of life : and they that do things that please Him shall receive the fruit of the tree of immortality.

"The fear of the Lord is all wisdom ; and in all wisdom is the performance of the law, and the knowledge of his omnipotence.

"Envy not the glory of a sinner : for thou knowest not what shall be his end."

II.

"Delight not in the thing that the ungodly have pleasure in ; but remember they shall not go unpunished unto their grave.

"Many have sinned for a small matter ; and he that seeketh for abundance will turn his eyes away.

"As a nail sticketh fast between the joinings of the stones ; so doth sin stick close between buying and selling.

"Unless a man hold himself diligently in the fear of the Lord, his house shall soon be overthrown.

"As when one sifteth with a sieve, the refuse remaineth ; so the filth of man in his talk.

"The furnace proveth the potter's vessels ; so the trial of man is in his reasoning.

"The fruit declareth if the tree have been dressed ; so is the utterance of a conceit in the heart of man.

"Praise no man before thou hearest him speak ; for this is the trial of men.

"If thou followest righteousness, thou shalt obtain her, and put her on, as a glorious long robe.

"The birds will resort unto their like ; so will truth return unto them that practise in her.

"As the lion lieth in wait for her prey ; so sin for them that work iniquity.

"The discourse of a godly man is always with wisdom ; but a fool changeth as the moon.

"If thou be among the indiscreet, observe the time ; but be continually among men of understanding.

"The discourse of fools is irksome, and their sport is the wantonness of sin.

"The talk of him that sweareth much maketh the hair stand upright; and their brawls make one stop his ears.

"The strife of the proud is bloodshedding, and their revilings are grievous to the ear.

"Whoso discovereth secrets loseth his credit; and shall never find friend to his mind."

CHAPTER CXXIII.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS.

I.

"Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

"MY son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

"Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

"When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

"For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

"Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.

"The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

"A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.

"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.

"Hear me, your father, O children, and do thereafter, that ye may be safe.

"For the Lord hath given the father honour over the children, and hath confirmed the authority of the mother over the sons.

"Whoso honoureth his father maketh an atonement for his sins :

"And he that honoureth his mother is as one that layeth up treasure."

II.

"Whoso honoureth his father shall have joy of his own children ; and when he maketh his prayer, he shall be heard.

"He that honoureth his father shall have a long life ; and he that is obedient unto the Lord shall be a comfort to his mother.

"He that feareth the Lord will honour his father, and will do service unto his parents, as to his masters.

"Honour thy father and mother both in word and deed, that a blessing may come upon thee from them.

"For the blessing of the father establisheth the houses of children ; but the curse of the mother rooteth out foundations.

"Glory not in the dishonour of thy father ; for thy father's dishonour is no glory unto thee.

"For the glory of a man is from the honour of his father ; and a mother in dishonour is a reproach to the children.

"My son, help thy father in his age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth.

"And if his understanding fail, have patience with him ; and despise him not when thou art in thy full strength.

"For the relieving of thy father shall not be forgotten : and instead of sins it shall be added to build thee up.

"In the day of thine affliction it shall be remembered ; thy sins also shall melt away, as the ice in the fair warm weather.

"He that forsaketh his father is as a blasphemer; and he that angereth his mother is cursed of God" (Ecclus. iii. 1-16).

CHAPTER CXXIV.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

SYMPATHY OF WORDS.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

"The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverse-ness therein is a breach in the spirit.

"Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

"Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.

"The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

"Admonish a friend, it may be he hath not done it: and if he have done it, that he do it no more.

"Admonish thy friend, it may be he hath not said it: and if he have, that he speak it not again.

"Admonish a friend: for many times it is a slander, and believe not every tale.

"There is one that slippeth in his speech, but not from his heart; and who is he that hath not offended with his tongue?

"Admonish thy neighbour before thou threaten him; and not being angry, give place to the law of the Most High."

SYMPATHY OF DEEDS.

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and

there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

"He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth Him hath mercy on the poor.

"Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.

"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

"A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

"Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not: neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity.

"Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife.

"Forsake not an old friend; for the new is not comparable to him: a new friend is as new wine; when it is old, thou shalt drink it with pleasure.

"Love thy friend, and be faithful unto him: but if thou bewrayest his secrets, follow no more after him.

"For as a man hath destroyed his enemy; so hast thou lost the love of thy neighbour.

"As one that letteth a bird go out of his hand, so hast thou let thy neighbour go, and shalt not get him again.

"Follow after him no more, for he is too far off; he is as a roe escaped out of the snare.

"As for a wound, it may be bound up; and after reviling there may be reconciliation: but he that bewrayeth secrets is without hope."

ORDER AND DILIGENCE.

"The ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

"The conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks ;

"The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands ;

"The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

"There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going :

"A lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any ;

"A greyhound ; an he-goat also ; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.

"He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread : but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

"Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds.

"For riches are not for ever : and doth the crown endure to every generation ?

"The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

"The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field."

SLOTH.

"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son : but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.

"The sluggard will not plough by reason of the cold ; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

"As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.

"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

"The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns : but the way of the righteous is made plain.

"The hand of the diligent shall bear rule : but the slothful shall be under tribute."

THE BOY AND THE BEE.

AN idle boy had laid his head
Down in a meadow full of flowers,
With daisy buds around him spread,
And clover blossoms white and red,
So fragrant after showers.

And as he lay with half-shut eye,
Watching the hazy light, came flying
A busy bee with laden thigh,
Across the blossoms growing by
The spot where he was lying.

"O busy bee," the boy begun,
"Stay with me, now you've come at last;
I love to see across the sun,
Like gossamer so finely spun,
Your wings go sailing past."

But with a low and surly hum,
The bee into a blossom flew,
As if the living creature dumb,
Had answered short, "I cannot come,
I've something else to do."

"O bee, you're such a little thing,"
The idle boy went on to say;
"What matters all that you can bring?
You'd better rest your silver wing,
And have a bit of play."

But with his sullen hum, and slow,
The bee passed on, and would not stay,
As though he murmured, "Don't you know
That little things must work below,
Each in his little way?"

I know not if the idler caught
This lesson from the busy bee,
But through his mind there came a thought
As it flew by him : "Is there nought,
No work to do for me?

"My sister asked me on the wall
To nail her rose's long green shoot,
The rose she likes the best of all,
Because the lady at the hall
In autumn gave the root.

"Poor baby has been hard to cheer,
All day he would not sleep or smile;
I might go home and fetch him here,
And pluck him flowers, while mother dear
Should rest a little while.

"Go dive into the clover red,
Old bee, and hum your surly tune,
And pack your honey close," he said,
Upspringing from his grassy bed,
"I'll be as busy soon."

Mrs. C. Alexander.

CHAPTER CXXV.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

DECEIT.

"THESE six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are
an abomination unto Him :

"A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed
innocent blood,

"An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet
that be swift in running to mischief,

"A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that
soweth discord among brethren.

"Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil : but to the counsellors of peace is joy.

"There shall no evil happen to the just : but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.

"Lying lips are abomination to the Lord : but they that deal truly are His delight.

"A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish.

"Delight is not seemly for a fool ; much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

"A false balance is abomination to the Lord : but a just weight is his delight.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend ; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

PRIDE.

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility.

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

"Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth ; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

"Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

"When pride cometh then cometh shame : but with the lowly is wisdom.

"My son, go on with thy business in meekness ; so shalt thou be beloved of him that is approved.

"The greater thou art, the more humble thyself, and thou shalt find favour before the Lord.

"Many are in high place, and of renown : but mysteries are revealed unto the meek.

"For the power of the Lord is great, and he is honoured of the lowly.

"Seek not out the things that are too hard for thee, neither search the things that are above thy strength.

"But what is commanded thee, think thereupon with

reverence; for it is not needful for thee to see with thine eyes the things that are in secret.

"Be not curious in unnecessary matters: for more things are shewed unto thee than men understand.

"For many are deceived by their own vain opinion; and an evil suspicion hath overthrown their judgment.

"Without eyes thou shalt want light: profess not the knowledge therefore that thou hast not."

GOSSIP.

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

"Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

"He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.

"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

"The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.

"A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.

"A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.

"Go from the presence of a foolish man when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.

"The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit.

"The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so."

EVIL SPEAKING.

"Hear, O ye children, the discipline of the mouth: he that keepeth it shall never be taken in his lips.

"The sinner shall be left in his foolishness: both the evil speaker and the proud shall fall thereby.

"Accustom not thy mouth to swearing; neither use thyself to the naming of the Holy One.

"For as a servant that is continually beaten shall not be without a blue mark : so he that sweareth and nameth God continually shall not be faultless.

"A man that useth much swearing shall be filled with iniquity, and the plague shall never depart from his house : if he shall offend, his sin shall be upon him : and if he acknowledge not his sin, he maketh a double offence : and if he swear in vain, he shall not be innocent, but his house shall be full of calamities.

"There is a word that is clothed about with death : God grant that it be not found in the heritage of Jacob ; for all such things shall be far from the godly, and they shall not wallow in their sins.

"Use not thy mouth to intemperate swearing, for therein is the word of sin.

"Curse the whisperer and double-tongued : for such have destroyed many that were at peace.

"A backbiting tongue hath disquieted many, and driven them from nation to nation : strong cities hath it pulled down, and overthrown the houses of great men.

"A backbiting tongue hath cast out virtuous women, and deprived them of their labours.

"Whoso hearkeneth unto it shall never find rest, and never dwell quietly.

"The stroke of the whip maketh marks in the flesh : but the stroke of the tongue breaketh the bones.

"Many have fallen by the edge of the sword : but not so many as have fallen by the tongue."

CHAPTER CXXVI.

PROVERBS (*continued*).

STRIFE AND ANGER.

I.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just ; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

"A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city : and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.

"He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.

"As a mad man who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?"

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer the strife ceaseth.

"As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

"A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

"If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

"For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.

"The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.

"A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones."

II.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.

"A stone is heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both.

"Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?"

"Open rebuke is better than secret love.

"The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression."

"Remember the commandments, and bear no malice to thy neighbour: remember the covenant of the Highest, and wink at ignorance.

"Abstain from strife, and thou shalt diminish thy sins: for a furious man will kindle strife.

"A sinful man disquieteth friends, and maketh debate among them that be at peace.

"As the matter of the fire is, so it burneth : and as a man's strength is, so is his wrath ; and according to his riches his anger riseth ; and the stronger they are which contend, the more they will be inflamed.

"An hasty contention kindleth a fire : and an hasty fighting sheddeth blood.

"If thou blow the spark, it shall burn : if thou spit upon it, it shall be quenched : and both these come out of thy mouth."

FOLLY.

"The great God that formed all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

"As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit ? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

"The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way ; a lion is in the streets.

"As the door turneth upon his hinges, so doth the slothful upon his bed.

"The slothful hideth his hand in his bosom ; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

"The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.

"A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil : but the fool rageth, and is confident.

"The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul : but it is abomination to fools to depart from evil.

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise : but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.

"He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage.

"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes : but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

"A fool's wrath is presently known : but a prudent man covereth shame."

CONVERSATION.

"He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.

"There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.

"The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

"Seven days do men mourn for him that is dead; but for a fool and an ungodly man all the days of his life.

"Talk not much with a fool, and go not to him that hath no understanding: beware of him, lest thou have trouble, and thou shalt never be defiled with his fooleries: depart from him, and thou shalt find rest, and never be disquieted with madness.

"What is heavier than lead? and what is the name thereof, but a fool?

"Sand, and salt, and a mass of iron, is easier to bear than a man without understanding.

"As timber girt and bound together in a building cannot be loosed with shaking: so the heart that is stablished by advised counsel shall fear at no time.

"A heart settled upon a thought of understanding is as a fair plastering on the wall of a gallery.

"Pales set on an high place will never stand against the wind: so a fearful heart in the imagination of a fool cannot stand against any fear."

REPENTANCE.

"He that pricketh the eye will make tears to fall: and he that pricketh the heart maketh it to shew her knowledge.

"Whoso casteth a stone at the birds frayeth them away: and he that upbraideth his friend breaketh friendship.

"Though thou drewest a sword at thy friend, yet despair not: for there may be a returning to favour.

"If thou hast opened thy mouth against thy friend, fear not; for there may be a reconciliation: except for upbraiding, or pride, or disclosing of secrets, or a

treacherous wound : for for these things every friend will depart," (Ecclus. xxii.)

"My son, hast thou sinned? do so no more, but ask pardon for thy former sins.

"Flee from sin as from the face of a serpent; for if thou comest too near it, it will bite thee: the teeth thereof are as the teeth of a lion, slaying the souls of men.

"All iniquity is as a two-edged sword, the wounds whereof cannot be healed.

"To terrify and do wrong will waste riches: thus the house of proud men shall be made desolate.

"A prayer out of a poor man's mouth reacheth to the ears of God, and His judgment cometh speedily.

"He that hateth to be reproved is in the way of sinners: but he that feareth the Lord will repent from his heart.

"An eloquent man is known far and near; but a man of understanding knoweth when he slippeth.

"He that buildeth his house with other men's money is like one that gathereth himself stones for the tomb of his burial.

"The congregation of the wicked is like tow wrapped together: and the end of them is a flame of fire to destroy them.

"The way of sinners is made plain with stones, but the end thereof is the pit of hell.

"He that keepeth the law of the Lord getteth the understanding thereof: and the perfection of the fear of the Lord is wisdom.

"He that is not wise will not be taught: but there is a wisdom which multiplieth bitterness," (Ecclus. xxii.)

FORETHOUGHT.

"Learn before thou speak, and use physic or ever thou be sick.

"Before judgment examine thyself, and in the day of visitation thou shalt find mercy.

"Humble thyself before thou be sick, and in the time of sins shew repentance.

"Let nothing hinder thee to pay thy vow in due time, and defer not until death to be justified.

"Before thou prayest prepare thyself; and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.

"Think upon the wrath that shall be at the end, and the time of vengeance, when he shall turn away his face.

"When thou hast enough, remember the time of hunger: and when thou art rich, think upon poverty and need.

"From the morning until the evening the time is changed, and all things are soon done before the Lord.

"A wise man will fear in everything, and in the day of sinning he will beware of sloth.

"Strive not with a mighty man, lest thou fall into his hands.

"Be not at variance with a rich man, lest he overweigh thee: for gold hath destroyed many, and perverted the hearts of kings.

"Strive not with a man that is full of tongue, and heap not wood upon his fire.

"Jest not with a rude man, lest thy ancestors be disgraced.

"Reproach not a man that turneth from sin, but remember that we are all worthy of punishment.

"Dishonour not a man in his old age: for even some of us wax old.

"Rejoice not over thy greatest enemy being dead, but remember that we die all.

"O how great is he that findeth wisdom! yet is there none above him that feareth the Lord.

"But the love of the Lord passeth all things for illumination: he that holdeth it, whereto shall he be likened?

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of His love: and faith is the beginning of cleaving unto him.

"Give me any plague, but the plague of the heart: and any wickedness, but the wickedness of a woman:

"And any affliction, but the affliction from them that hate me: and any revenge, but the revenge of enemies.

"There is no head above the head of a serpent; and there is no wrath above the wrath of an enemy.

"I had rather dwell with a lion and a dragon, than to keep house with a wicked woman.

"The wickedness of a woman changeth her face, and darkeneth her countenance like sackcloth."

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

THOUGH I'm now in younger days,
Nor can tell what shall befall me,
I'll prepare for every place
Where my growing age shall call me.

Should I e'er be sick or great,
Others shall partake my goodness;
I'll supply the poor with meat,
Never shewing scorn or rudeness.

Where I see the blind or lame,
Deaf or dumb, I'll kindly treat them;
I deserve to get the same,
If I mock, or hurt, or cheat them.

If I meet with railing tongues,
Why should I return them railing;
Since I best revenge my wrongs
By my patience never failing;

When I hear them telling lies,
Talking foolish, cursing, swearing,
First I'll try to make them wise,
Or I'll soon go out of hearing.

What though I be low or mean,
I'll engage the rich to love me,
While I'm modest, neat, and clean,
And submit when they reprove me.

If I should be poor and sick,
 I shall meet, I hope, with pity,
 Since I love to help the weak,
 Though they're neither fair nor witty.

I'll not willingly offend,
 Nor be easily offended:
 What's amiss I'll strive to mend,
 And endure what can't be mended.

May I be as watchful still
 O'er my humours and my passion,
 As to speak and do no ill,
 Though it should be all the fashion.

Wicked fashions lead to hell;
 Ne'er may I be found complying:
 But in life behave so well,
 Not to be afraid of dying.
Dr. Watts.

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

- B. C.
4004. The Creation and Fall of Man.
2348. The Deluge.
*2207. Babel. Dispersion of Noah's descendants. (Dr. Angus, 2247).
Job (*supposed date*).
1998. Death of Noah.
1996. BIRTH OF ABRAM.
1921. Call of Abram.
1910. Birth of Ishmael.
1896. Birth of Isaac.
1872. Sacrifice of Isaac.
1836. Birth of Esau and Jacob.
1728. Joseph sold into Egypt.
1706. Jacob and his sons go down into Egypt.
1689. Death of Jacob.
1571. Birth of Moses.
1531. Moses' flight into Midian.
1491. Moses at the burning bush. The EXODUS.
1451. Entrance into Canaan.
*1338. Deborah and Barak. (Dr. Angus, 1316.)
*1296. Ruth's marriage to Boaz. (Dr. Angus, 1256.)
*1291. Gideon's victory over Midian. (Dr. Angus, 1249.)
*1188. Jephthah's vow.
1156. Birth of Samson.
1155. Birth of Samuel.
1116. Death of Samson and Eli.
1096. Saul anointed king. The MONARCHY.
1064. David anointed king, (1 Sam. xvi.) His victory over Goliath.
1060. David's flight from Saul.
1056. Saul's death. David made King of Judah.
1049. David made king of the whole tribes: takes Jerusalem.
1025. Revolt of Absalom.
1016. Rebellion of Adonijah.
1016. Death of David. Accession of Solomon.
1004. Dedication of the Temple.

* In the *Bible Hand-Book* of Dr. Angus, these dates are respectively given as 2247, 1316, 1256, 1249.

976. Death of Solomon. Revolt of ten tribes.
 (For dates of the Kings of Judah and Israel, see p. 199.)
 721. Captivity of the Ten Tribes.
 606. CAPTIVITY of Judah.
 588. Destruction of the Temple.
 536. Return of the Jews under Zerubbabel. CYRUS.
 516. Dedication of the second Temple.
 458. Ezra goes to Jerusalem: collects the Scriptures.
 429. Completion of the wall of Jerusalem under Nehemiah
 (Dr. Angus, 445).
 397. The close of prophecy, (Mal. iv.)
 332. Alexander the Great visits Jerusalem.
 170. Antiochus Epiphanes takes Jerusalem: profanes the
 Temple.
 165. Judas Maccabæus purifies the Temple.
 130. Temple on Mount Gerizim destroyed.
 65. Syria made a Roman Province.
 37. Herod the Great takes Jerusalem.
 17. Herod begins to rebuild the Temple.
 5. Birth of John the Baptist.
 4. Birth of JESUS CHRIST.

GENEALOGY FROM ADAM TO JACOB.

B.C. 4004-1836.

1. Adam.	12. Arphaxad.
2. Seth.	13. Salah.
3. Enos.	14. Eber.
4. Cainan.	15. Peleg.
5. Mahalaleel.	16. Reu.
6. Jared.	17. Serug.
7. Enoch.	18. Nahor.
8. Methusaleh.	19. Terah.
9. Lamech.	20. Abram.
10. Noah.	21. Isaac.
11. Shem.	22. Jacob.

JACOB'S SONS.

1. Reuben.	} Sons of Leah.
2. Simeon.	
3. Levi.	
4. Judah.	
5. Issachar.	
6. Zebulon.	

7. Dan.	}	Sons of Bilhah.
8. Naphthali.		
9. Gad.	}	Sons of Zilpah.
10. Asher.		
11. Joseph.	}	Sons of Rachel.
12. Benjamin.		

FORTY-TWO JOURNEYS OF ISRAEL IN THE WILDER- NESS—FROM B.C. 1491-1451.

1. To SUCCOTH.
 2. ETHAM.
 3. PI-HA-HI-ROTH—Pursuit of Pharaoh.
 4. MARAH—Passage of Red Sea. Sweetening of waters.
 5. ELIM.
 6. RED SEA.
 7. SIN—Murmuring for bread. Quails and manna sent.
 8. DOPHKAH.
 9. ALUSE.
 10. REPHIDIM—Water drawn from Horeb. Amalek defeated.
 11. SINAI—The law given.
 12. Wilderness of PARAN—Appointment of seventy elders.
- Burning at Taberah.
13. HAZAROTH—Miriam's rebellion.
 14. KADESH-BARNEA—Report of the spies. Rebellion of Korah.
- 15-31. Wanderings of Israel in the wilderness for 38 years.
 32. KADESH—Moses draws water from the rock at Meribah.
 33. MOUNT HOR—Death of Aaron.
 34. ZALMONAH—Brazen serpent.
 35. PUNON.
 36. OBOTH.
 37. SIM.
 38. DIBON-GAD—Defeat of Sihon and Og.
 39. ALMON-DIB-LA-THA-IM.
 40. ABARIM.
 41. PLAINS OF MOAB—Balak and Balaam.
 42. Do. Idolatry of Baal-peor. Slaughter of Midian.
-

JUDGES.—FROM B.C. 1402-1096.

Judges.	Oppressors.
1. Othniel,	Mesopotamia.
2. Ehud,	Moab.
3. Shamgar,	Philistines.
4. Deborah and Barak,	Canaanites.
5. Gideon,	Midianites.
6. Abimelech.	
7. Tola.	
8. Jair.	
9. Jephthah,	Ammonites.
10. Ibzan.	
11. Elon.	
12. Abdon.	
13. Samson,	Philistines.
14. Eli,	do.
15. Samuel,	do.

KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

1. OF THE UNDIVIDED KINGDOM.

Kings.	Accession, B.C.
Saul,	1096
David,	1056
Solomon,	1016

2. OF THE DIVIDED KINGDOMS.

JUDAH.	Accession, B.C.	ISRAEL.	Accession, B.C.
Rehoboam,	976	Jeroboam I.,	976
Abijah,	959	Nadab,	955
Asa,	956	Baasha,	953
Jehoahaphat,	915	Elah,	931
Jehoram,	889	Zimri,	930
Ahaziah,	885	Omri,	930
Athaliah (<i>Queen</i>),	883	Ahab,	917
Joash,	877	Jehoram,	897
Amaziah,	838	Jehu,	883
Uzziah,	808	Jehoahaz,	855
Jotham,	756	Jehoash,	838
Ahaz,	742	Jeroboam II.,	823
Hezekiah,	726	Zechariah,	771
		Shallum (1 month),	770
		Menahem,	770
		Pekahiah,	761
		Pekah,	759
		Hoshea,	730

3. AFTER THE CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL.

Kings of Judah.	Accession, B.C.
Manasseh,	697
Amon,	642
Josiah,	640
Jehoahaz (3 months),	609
Jehoiakim,	609
Jehoiachin (3 months),	599
Zedekiah,	599

APPENDIX II.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

TROY WEIGHT.

	lbs.	oz.	dwt.	grs.
1 Gerah =	0	0	0	12
10 Gerahs = 1 bekah,	0	0	5	0
2 Bekahs = 1 shekel,	0	0	10	0
60 Shekels = 1 maneh,	2	6	0	0
50 Maneh = 1 talent,	125	0	0	0

LONG MEASURE.

	feet.	ins.
1 Digit = (Jer. lii. 21),	0	0·912
4 Digits = 1 palm (Exod. xxv. 25),	0	3·648
3 Palms = 1 span (Exod. xxviii. 16),	0	10·944
3 Spans = 1 cubit (Gen. vi. 15),	1	9·888
2 Cubits = 1 fathom (Acts xxvii. 28),	7	3·552
1·5 Fathoms = 1 reed (Ezek. xl. 3-5),	10	11·328
13·3 Reeds = 1 line (Ezek. xl. 3),	145	11·04

LAND MEASURE.

	Eng. miles.	paces.	feet.
A Cubit =	0	0	1·824
400 Cubits = 1 furlong (Luke xxiv. 13),	0	145	4·6
5 Furlongs = { 1 Sabbath day's journey } (Acts i. 12),	0	729	3·0
10 Furlongs = 1 mile (Matt. v. 41),	1	403	1·0
24 Miles = 1 day's journey,	33	172	4·0

LIQUID MEASURE.

		gals.	pts.
A Caph	=	0	0.625
1.3 Caph	= 1 log (Lev. xiv. 10),	0	0.833
4 Logs	= 1 cab	0	3.333
3 Cabs	= 1 hin (Exod. xxx. 24),	1	2
3 Hins	= 1 seah	2	4
3 Seahs	= { 1 bath or ephah (1 Kings vii. 26; John ii. 6),	7	4
10 Ephahs	= { 1 kor or homer (Ezek. xlv. 14; Isa. v. 10),	75	5

DRY MEASURE.

		pkts.	gals.	pts.
A Gachal	=	0	0	0.1416
20 Gachals	= 1 cab (2 Kings vi. 25; Rev. vi. 6),	0	0	2.8333
1.3 Cabs	= 1 omer (Exod. xvi. 36),	0	0	5.1
3.3 Omers	= 1 seah (Matt. xiii. 33),	1	0	1
3 Seahs	= 1 ephah (Ezek. xlv. 11),	3	0	3
5 Ephahs	= 1 letech (Hos. iii. 2),	16	0	0
2 Letechs	= 1 kor or homer (Num. xi. 32; Hos. iii. 2),	32	0	0

N.B.—The above Table will explain many texts in the Bible, especially those which are placed within brackets. They also make the following, from Isa. v. 10, much more clear:—

“Yea, ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of an homer shall yield an ephah.”

The curse upon the covetous man was, that 10 acres of vines should produce only 7 gallons of wine—i.e., 1 acre should yield less than 3 quarts, and that 32 pecks of seed should only bring a crop of 3 pecks, or in other words, nine-tenths of the seed sown should die in the ground, and so produce nothing, only one-tenth sprouting up into plants.

JEWISH MONEY.

		£	s.	d.
A Gerah	= (Exod. xxx. 13),			1.26
10 Gerahs	= 1 bekah (Exod. xxxiii. 26),	1	1	68
2 Bekahs	= 1 shekel { (Exod. xxx. 13, Isa. vii. 23; Matt. xvii. 27),	2	3	37
50 Shekels	= 1 minah (Luke xix. 13),	5	14	0.75
60 Minahs	= 1 talent,	342	3	9
A Gold Shekel,		1	16	6
A Talent of gold,		5475	0	0

N.B.—A Shekel would probably purchase nearly ten times as much as the same nominal amount will now buy.

ROMAN MONEY.

		£	s.	d.
1 Mite	(Mark xii. 42),	. 0	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
2 Mites = 1 farthing	(Mark xii. 42),	. 0	0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
4 Farthings = 1 penny	(Matt. xxii. 19),	. 0	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
100 Pence = 1 pound	(Matt. xviii. 24),	. 3	2	6

NOTES.—From these tables we learn the following lessons:—
Naaman offered Elisha 6000 pieces (shekels) of gold, *i.e.*, more than £10,000.

The debtor had been forgiven 10,000 talents, *i.e.* £3,000,000.

He refused to forgive his fellow-servant 100 pence, *i.e.* £3, 2s. 6d.

Judas sold our Lord for 30 pieces of silver, *i.e.* £3, 10s. 8d, the

legal compensation for a slave, if killed by a beast.

Joseph was sold by his brethren for £2, 7s. 0d.

TIME.

The *natural* DAY was from sunrise to sunset.

The NIGHT was from sunset to sunrise.

But the *civil* day was from sunset one evening to sunset the next,—“for the evening and the morning were the *first* day.”

NIGHT (Ancient).	DAY (Ancient).
First Watch (Lam. ii. 19), till midnight.	Morning, . till 10 a.m.
Middle „ (Judg. vii. 19), till 3 a.m.	Heat of day, till 2 p.m.
Morning „ (Exod. xiv. 24), till 6 a.m.	Cool of day, till 6 p.m.

NIGHT (New Testament).	DAY (New Testament).
First Watch, Evening, . . 6-9 p.m.	Third Hour, . 6-9 a.m.
Second „ Midnight, . . 9-12 p.m.	Sixth „ . 9-12 noon.
Third „ Cockcrow, . . 12-3 a.m.	Ninth „ . 12-3 p.m.
Fourth „ Morning, . . 3-6 a.m.	Twelfth „ . 3-6 p.m.

N.B.—Our Lord's words predicting his resurrection are the usual expressions for the *civil*, not the *natural* day. Thus, three “days and nights” is in the Greek all one word, which would be more correctly translated three “civil days,” implying that the intervening nights were included, and that He did not mean that He should be in the grave by *day* and not by *night*.

THE YEAR.

Month of Sacred Year.	Month of Civil Year.	NAMES	Length of Days.	English Months, Parts of	Products.	Jewish Festivals.
I.	VII.	Abib or Hiran,	30	Mar. and April	{ Barley ripe, Fig in blossom.	Passover.
II.	VIII.	Tyar or Zif,	29	Apr. and May	{ Barley harvest.	Paschal.
III.	IX.	Sisan,	30	May and June	{ Wheat harvest.	Pentecost.
IV.	X.	Thammuz,	29	June and July	{ Early vintage.	
V.	XI.	Ab (Ezra vii. 9),	30	July and Aug.	{ Ripe figs.	
VI.	XII.	Elul (Neh. vi. 15),	29	Aug. and Sept.	{ General vintage.	
VII.	I.	Tizri (1 Kings viii. 2),	30	Sept. and Oct.		{ Feast of Trumpets: Atonement: Tabernacles
VIII.	II.	Bul (1 Kings vi. 35),	29	Oct. and Nov.	Latter grapes.	{ Dedication, Dec. 20.
IX.	III.	Chisleu (Zech. vii. 1),	30	Nov. and Dec.	Grass after rains.	
X.	IV.	Thebeth (Ezra ii. 16),	29	Dec. and Jan.	Winter figs.	
XI.	V.	Sheboth (Zech. i. 7),	30	Jan. and Feb.	Almond blossoms.	Purim.
XII.	VI.	Adar (Ezra vi. 15),	29	Feb. and Mar.		
XIII.		Be-Adar or 2nd Adar.				

N.B.—The SACRED Year reckoned from the moon after the Vernal Equinox. The CIVIL Year began in September (the fruitless part of the year). The prophets used the *Sacred* Year; those engaged in secular pursuits the *Civil*. The year was divided into 12 lunar months, with every third year a thirteenth.



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